A HEAVENLY CONFERENCE BETWEEN CHRIST AND MARY AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

WHEREIN

The intimate familiarity, and near relation between Christ and a Believer is discovered.

By *R. Sibs*, Doctor of Divinity, Master of *Katherine* Hall in *Cambridge*, and late Preacher at *Grayes* Inne.

LONDON,
Printed by *S. G.* for *John Rothwel*, and are to be sold at the *Fountain* and *Bear* in *Cheapside*, 1654.

TO THE READER;

THe ſcope and buſineſs of this Epiſtle, is not ſo much to commend the Workman, (whoſe name is a ſweet ſavor in the Church,) As to give thee a ſhort and ſummary view of the generalls handled in this Treatiſe though much might be ſaid of this eminent Saint, If either detraction had faſtened her venomous nails in his pretious name, or the teſtimony of the Subſcribers of this Epiſtle, might give the Book a freer admiſſion into thy hands. This only we ſhall crave leave to mind the

Reader of, That this bright Star, wh
sometimes with his light refreshed th
soules of many of Gods people, while h
shone in the horizon of our Church, se
(as we may say) between the evening o
many shadowes, and the morning of
bright hoped for Reformation, which
though it be for the present overcast, ye
(being so agreeable to the mind of Jesu
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Now as it is the wisdom of God i
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That the ſouls of his hearers being captivated with the inward beauty and glory of Chriſt, and being led into an experimental knowledge of heavenly truths, their ſpirits might not evaporate, and diſcharge themſelves in endleſs gainleſs, ſoul-unedifying, and conſcience-perplexing queſtions: For as it is in nature, a man that hath taſted the ſweetneſs of honey, will not eaſily be perſwaded that honey is bitter. But he that hath only taken it up upon credit, may ſoon be baffled out of it, becauſe no act can go higher then its principle; and ſo it is in Religion; for thoſe good ſouls that have imbraced the truths of Jeſus Chriſt, upon a ſupernatural principle, and experimented not only the truth but the goodneſs of them, in their own ſouls, they are the clinched chriſtians, the good hold-

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faſt men (as Mr. Fox ſtiles ſome Chri
ſtians in his dayes) they are the ev
and ſteady walkers. Whereas thoſe th
have only a form of godlineſs, a ſlig
tincture, who have only out of novel
and curioſity, or pride and ambition,
other ſelf ends, profeſſed Religion, w
prove giddy and unconſtant, like Clou
carried about with every blaſt; a
while they promiſe themſelves liberty,
a prey to the net of every fancy and op
nion.

To the ſound and practical Chriſtia
that is not ſqueaſie ſtomacked, will t
truths in this treatiſe be grateful, ſu
poſing therefore, and deſiring, if th
art not, thou may'ſt be ſuch a one. He
is offered to thy conſideration, a divi
and heavenly Diſcourſe betwixt Chri
and Mary, between a ſoul-burthen
ſinner, and a burthen-removing Sav
our.

Thou may'ſt here ſee how diligen
Mary is to ſeek, how ready Chriſt is
be found. Mary hath her heart br
full of ſorrow, Chriſt Comes as it w
leaping over he Mountains with co
fo

fort, and bowels of compassion. Mary was in a strong pang of affection; nay her affections were wound so high, that her expressions seem broken, and her actions might seem to savor of irregularity, were it not to that excellency of the object, did warrant the height of her affection, and the compassion of Christ was large enough, not only to interpret for the best, but also to pardon and cover all her infirmities. The woman was better at her affections, then expressions. They have taken away my Lord, she speaks at random, names no body, whether Jews, or Disciples, or Souldiers. But see the strength of her faith, she is not ashamed to call him Lord, even in the lowest state of humiliation, though Christ be reproached, persecuted, despised, rejected, dead, buried, yet he shall be Maries Lord. Again, I know not where they have laid him, she dreams of a bodily asportation, and resting of Christ somewhere, and speaks with indignation, as if she looked upon it as an indignity, or incivility, nay of cruelty, sævitum est in cadavera, sævitum est in ossa, sævitum est in cineres. Cypri-

an of the Roman Emperors cruelty
to remove a dead body. What was don
to Christ, Mary takes it as done to he
and good heart she thinks she hath
much right to him, that he should not
stirred without her knowledge. And
know not where, &c.

Now while Mary is seeking Chri
(who is never far absent from a seeki
soul) he stands at her back. Christ
neerer to us many times then we think
Sometimes a poor soul wants the sight
comfort, more then matter of comfort, a
is like Hagar, weeping for water, wh
the well is hard by: seeking of Ch
is the souls duty; but Christ manifest
himself is the souls comfort. Mary tu
ed her self, and she saw Jesus. Ge
saith the Angels rose up at the presen
Christ, which Mary seeing, made
turn about; but omitting that conjec
The original word στρέφεσθαι is some
used for a turning of the face; but
frequently for a turning of the who
dy: but to put it out of doubt here
said exegetically, ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω
turned her self back. The same
the Steptuagint use of Lots wife

Ideo conversa est, quia angeli assurrexerunt præsentiæ Christi. Gerson.

Καὶ ἐπέβλεψεν ἢ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω. i. e. se domum versus præter virum suum qui subsequebatur ipsam. Junius in anal. in Gen:

back. Many times Christ hath his face towards us, when we have our backs upon him, and therefore if thou wouldest finde Christ, turn thy self to him.

Again, here thou may'st see the true Joseph, he knowes Mary, when she knows not him, but takes him for the Gardner. Christ is always before-hand with us in his grace, he loves us before we love him, and calls us before we call him. Mary travails with desires to find Christ, and Christ is full of yernings towards her: like Joseph, he could not refrain himself: and because the general manifestation of Christ wrought little, he calles her by her name Mary, and she being a sheep of Christ, knowes his voice, and answers him with a title of dignity, Rabboni, that is to say, my Master.

We may see here, that discoveries of grace are not fruitless, they stir up in believers, reverence, and obedience. Let no sin becauſe grace abounds, is the Devils application of Christs Doctrine.

These and several other particulars, are with much brevity, spirituality, and perspicuity handled in this Treatise, and

with

with that liveliness that they shew the
come from one, whose own heart savou
what he taught to others. The large
part of this Book is spent upon that sweet
Doctrine viz. A Believers interest
God as a Father, and the comforts this
flowe from that sweet relation. The fou
dation of our relation to God is the
handled, and how God is first a Fathe
to Christ, and in him to us. What can
more comfortable in this earthly inte
shaking, disjoynting confounding da
then to clear up to our souls an inte
in God: Tolle meum, & tolle Deu
as he said, it were better for me th
were no God, then that he should not
my God, this will be thy comfort, t
when thou canst not say, my state,
liberty, my House, my Land, my fri
my Trade, thou may'st be able to
my Father, my God. If therefore t
savorest the things of God, this sub
will be acceptable and grateful to
and if this Treatise may be any w
instrumental, for putting thee upon
how to get it, or upon practice how to
prove it, or in case thy soul sits in dark

how to endeare and clear thy inte-
rest, the publishers shal have much of their
ayme, and thou wilt have no cause to re-
sent thy cost in buying, or thy pains in
reading. We shall adde no more but
this. Blessed is that man or woman that
soeuer hath an interest in him, who is the Fa-
ther of Jesus Christ by eternal Genera-
tion, and of all believers in Christ by a-
doption and regeneration, in which inhe-
ritance and portion, that thou may'st
have a share, shall be the prayer of

Thy souls, and thy faiths
Servants in the work
of the Ministery for
Jesus sake.

Simeon Ash,
James Nalton,
Joseph Church.

A heavenly Diſcourſe between *Chriſt* and *Mary* after his Reſurrection.

JOHN 20. 16.

Jeſus ſaid unto her, Mary, *ſhe turned her ſelf and ſaid to him,* Rabboni, *that is to ſay, Maſter: And* Jeſus *ſaid to her, touch me not, for I am not yet aſcended to my Father; but go to my Brethren, and ſay to them, I aſcend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.*

THe ſame love of Chriſt that drew him from Heaven to the womb of the Virgin, from the womb of the Virgin to the Croſſe, id from the Croſſe to the grave: the me love of Chriſt moved him to ſcover himſelf after he was riſen om the grave, to them that he ew did intirely and wonderfully

love him. And therefore before he would ascend to Heaven, he did vouchsafe many apparitions and discoveries of himself, partly to instruct them in the certainty of his Resurrection, and partly (but especially) to comfort them. Those that he knew did love him.

His first apparition of all was made to *Mary*, the woman out of whom he had cast seven Devils. She was much beholding to him, and therefore loved much. No *Sex* may discourage a sinner from Christ. She expresseth her love to Christ, by her desiring finding him, by her seeking & weeping, notwithstanding all impediments before she found him. As she wept, she stooped down and looked into the Sepulchre, and there saw two Angels in white, a colour of glory, purity and joy, because it was a time of joy: they were one at the head, and the other at the feet. As in the Law, upon Exod. 25. 20, the Mercy-Seat was made, two Cherubims were also fram'd and placed, one at the one end, and the other at the other end thereof, with their faces looking one towards another.

when Christ was risen, there were two Angels, one at the head, another at the feet, to shew that peace was to be expected in the true propitiatory, Jesus Christ.

One at the head, the other at the feet of the body of Jesus. And they sate there; it was a time of peace; peace was made between Heaven and Earth, God and man, and here is a posture of peace, *They sate quietly*. In Christ, Angels, and we are at one, God, and we, and all. There is a recapitulation, and gathering of all things Heaven and Earth. Col. 1. 20.

The Angels they attended on Christ in all the passages of his life & death, till they brought him to heaven. They brought news of his birth, comforted him in his agony, they were at his resurrection, and you see here they attend. At his ascension they accompany him. And as they did to the Head, so they will to the Members. In our Infancy they take charge of our tender years, in our dangers they watch their tents about us; in our deaths, they carry our souls to *Abrahams* bosome, a place of happiness. At Ministery of Angels towards Christ. Luke 2. 9. 10. Luke 22. 43. John 10. 12. Act. 1. 10. Heb. 1. 14. Psal. 34. 7. Luke 16. 22. Mat. 24. 31

our Resurrection their Office is t
gather our bodies together. That se
vice and attendance they afforded th
head, they afford to the Members, t
mysticall Christ, as well as natural
Therefore let us comfort our selves i
the service they did to Christ.

Now besides the apparition of t
Angells, here is the speech of the A
gels. Woman why weepest thou? th
knew she had no cause of weeping;
Christ whom she sought, was risen
gain.

She answereth, because they ha
taken away my Lord, and I know n
where they have laid him. If it h
been as she supposed, there had b
cause enough of her weeping, if
Lord had been taken away; for wh
the Lord is taken away, what remai
eth that is comfortable? And if t
Lord be not taken away, it mat
not what is taken away; for he is
in all. Carnall people, so they h
their wealth, and friends, and co
forts in the world, they care not w
is taken away. But she is of anot
mind. They have taken away
Lord, and what comfort can I hav

Presence of Christ comfortable.

my Lord be taken away.

But it was but the ſpeech of an opinion, ſhe did but think it. And there were two things might lead her, *truth* and *probability*, which is the foundation of opinion. *Probability*, he is not here, therefore he is taken away. *Truth* Chriſt promiſed he would riſe again, therefore he would take away himſelf. There was certain truth to ground faith, and weak probability to ground opinion; yet ſuch is the nature of weak perſons in diſtreſs: if there be probability & certain truth, yet they will be ſure to cleave to their probabilities. Oh theirs be great ſins, I, but there is greater mercy for faith to lay hold upon. So the preſumptuous ſinner faith, God is mercifull, I, but God hath excluded thee from Heaven, thou art an adulterer, a ſwearer, a filthy perſon, thy opinion is grounded ſcarce upon probability. God is mercifull, but not to ſuch ſinners, as live in ſins againſt reconciliation, as thou doſt. Therefore when one hath but probability to ground opinion, and the other certain truth to ground faith, be ſo wiſe for our

weakneſſe of faith now ſeen.

1 Cor. 6. 9.

ſouls, as to take the beſt, and leave t
other. If ſhe had remembered h
promiſe, to raiſe himſelf out of t
grave, ſhe needed not to have dou
ed.

They have taken away my Lord, a
I know not where they have laid hi
They have taken away, ſhe inſtance
none. And when ſhe had thus ſaid, ſ
turneth her back, and ſaw Jeſus ſtan
ing, and knew not that it was Jeſ

When Chriſt ſpeaks the Angels are ſilent.

The Angels hold their peace wh
Chriſt ſpeaks, and it is their place
to do.

But ſhe knew not that it was Jeſ
in reſpect of her paſſion. Her ſen
were held, partly by the power
God, partly by a kind of paſſion t
was a Cloud between her and Jeſ
that ſhe knew him not at that time.

What doth Jeſus ſay to her?

Chriſts firſt words after his Reſurrection.

Woman, why weepeſt thou? wh
ſeekeſt thou? The firſt words that e
Chriſt ſpake after his reſurrection
them he appeared to, is, *woman w*
weepeſt thou? It is a good queſtion
ter Chriſts Reſurrection, *what cauſ*
weeping, when Chriſt is riſen? O
ſins are forgiven, becauſe he, our he

and ſurety hath ſuffered death for us, and if Chriſt be riſen again, why weep we? If we be broken-hearted, humbled ſinners, that have intereſt in his death and reſurrection, we have no cauſe to grieve. It is therefore a good queſtion to them that believe, *why weepeſt thou? whom ſeekeſt thou?* They were queſtions, not for ſatisfaction to him, he knew it well enough, but to draw out her mind, and to draw out by confeſſion what God had hid in her heart, that he might comfort her afterwards.

But ſhe ſuppoſing him to be the Gardiner, ſaid, Sir, if thou haſt born him hence tell me, &c.

She had a miſconceit of Chriſt, as if he had been the *Gardiner*. Beloved, ſo it is with a ſinner, eſpecially in times of deſolation of ſpirit, and diſconſolate condition, they preſent Chriſt to themſelves as an enemy. She in paſſion thinks Chriſt the *Gardiner*. Do not many when they be melancholy of body, and troubled in mind, conceive of Chriſt as an Auſtere Judge, that will undoubtedly damn ſuch wretches as they are, who preſent

Miſapprehenſions of Chriſt in good men.

Mat.11.28 sent Christ to themselves in that fa-
shion, that the Scripture doth not
doth not he bid all that be weary and
heavy laden, come to him? and ye
they out of passion will present Christ
to be an austere judge, that will take
them at their disadvantage, observe
all their wayes, and will surely damn
them.

Passion clouds understanding.

It is a great violence that passion
and opinion offers to truth, and to sa-
ving truth, and the hardest matter in
the world for a distressed conscience
to apprehend God aright, and to ap-
prehend Christ aright. Secure persons
apprehend God under a false notion;
they apprehend God as a God all of
mercy, and Christ, as if he were no
Act.17.31 judge of the world, as if he observe
them not, nor their sinfull course;
and therefore they care not whether
they serve him or no. And Satan pre-
senteth Christ, all of mercy, and Sa-
tan and their hearts meeting toge-
ther, the mistake is dangerous. It is a
great art of faith, and an excellent
skill to apprehend Christ suitable to
our condition that we are in. When
we be in any sin, then think him

Judge

Judge, then think of *Moses*, rather then of Christ, then think of Christ, as one that will judge both quick and dead, for their hard and wicked actions. But when we be humble, and broken-harted, and touched with sence of sin, present him as a sweet Saviour, inviting and alluring all to come to him. *Come to me all ye, &c.* Present him as a gentle Shepheard, present him in all the sweet relations he names himself by in the Scriptures, lest otherwise we do Christ dishonour, and our selves wrong. Mat. 11. 28. Esay 40. 11.

If thou have born him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

She was a likely woman indeed to take Christ away; for a weak woman to take a heavy body away. But love thinks nothing impossible. Faith and Love agree in this, nothing is impossible. *Love is strong as death.* Neither love nor faith care for difficulties, they arm the soul to break through all. Love, a willing grace. Cant. 8. 6.

Tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

One would think the dead body might

might have frighted the woman, and the heavy body might have been above her strength; but she was in such an extasie of love, and desire and grief, for want of her desire, that she considered not well what she said.

They be words of passion, and indeed if you observe the story of *Mary Magdalen*, she was a woman of extremity in all conditions; like *Jonah* when he grieves, he grieves exceedingly, when he rejoyces, his joy is wound to the highest pitch. So she was full of love when she loved, and full of grief when she grieved, and full of joy when she joyed, she had large affections, all were in the highest measure and strained to the highest pin in her, and that made her say, *If thou ha[ve] &c.*

Jesus could not indure her longer in this perplext condition, he was too mercifull, and therefore saith, *Mary*, she turned to him, and saith *Rabboni* which is to say, Master.

And Jesus said to her, *Mary*.

The words are a sweet and loving intercourse between *Christ* and *Mary* in a seasonable time when she was in all

all her perplexity, and depth of sorrow for losse of her Lord. Christ seasonably at length, (as not being able to hold any longer, but must needs discover himself,) saith to her, *Mary*.

You see first of all Christ beginneth, and saith, *Mary*, she answereth in the second place, and saith *Rabboni*; and till Christ begins, no voice in the world can do any good. The Angels they spake to her, but till Christ spake nothing could comfort her. Christ began, and till Christ began nothing would comfort *Mary*. Christ began himself, and used but one word. It is a word, and but one word. Nothing will comfort but the word of Christ. The word that comforted her, when he spake, and it was but one word, and yet enough, there was such fulness of spirit, and comfort in that one word. And she answered with one word again.

Nothing can comfort the grieved soul till it heares the voice of Christ.

You may aske, why they spake but one word? Beloved, he was full of affection, and she was full of affection also, too full to expresse themselves in many words. As it is in grief, Grief

some-

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Ingentes dolores stupent.

sometimes may be so great, that scarce any words are able to express it; and if any words, then broken words (which shew fulness of affection) rather then any distinct sense. Christ was so full, and she so full, that a word discovers. And indeed there was so much sense, and so much love so much contained in these little words, *Mary* and *Rabboni*, that it is impossible to express them shorter, and her passion would not stay any longer discourse, it was by words, and by one word, *Mary*, it was by a word, which sheweth he took notice of her. Christ knowes the names of the Starres, he knowes every thing by name, he knows every thing of a man, to the very hair, he knowes their parts, and their very excrements of their parts he knew her, and acknowledged her too; *Mary*.

Christ takes notice of all his.

1. It is a word of knowledg, and familiar acquaintance, and acknowledgment.

2. It is a word of compassion, because he had held her long, and now could not longer. He pitieth the state she was in, he saw her ready to

fink for grief, and melt for sorrow, and therefore he said, *Mary*.

3. As it is a word of compassion: so it is a word full of exceeding love.

4. And it is a word of peculiar appropriation; *Mary*, whom I have so much respected heretofore. And a word of satisfaction on his part out of his pitty, and out of his love, and former familiarity & acquaintance. *Mary*, I am the man thou seekest, I know what all thy seekings tend to, thou wantest him whom thou lovest, thou wantest me, I am he, whom thou seekest.

She answered him again, *Rabboni*, which is interpreted, Master. She returned him an answer again, she spake to him, he first began, then she follows, she found the virtue of his speech in her heart, there was an influence of it to her heart; and his love witnessing to her heart, raised her love to him again. So it was an answer of Christs speech, and from the same affection, an answer of love, and an answer of exceeding large affection, and satisfaction to her soul. Oh my *Rabboni*, Rabboni

boni, the soul of my soule, the life of my life, my joy, my rock, my all that can be dear to me. *Rabboni*, I have enough. As he desired to give her satisfaction, so she takes satisfaction in the word. And yet it was not full satisfaction; for after she claspes about him, and would not let him go. It was an affection that stirred up much desire more and more to have communion with him, so that he was fain to check her afterward, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father*; she had not enough, as indeed a believing affectionate soul hath never enough till it be in Heaven.

The believing soul is never satisfied till it comes to Heaven.

And thus you see the sweet intercourse upon the apparition, and first discovery of *Christ* to *Mary*. He spake to her, and she answered him again with the same affection. And it is a word of dependance, as it is fit, *Rabboni* my Master, it is not only a word of honour, not any *superior*, but a superior in way of teaching, there was submission of conscience to the *Rabboni*; as the *Rabboni* labouring to sit in the consciences of people. It is a *Syriack* word which signifieth in the originall

riginall, Multiplication of knowledge in him that speaketh, & that laboureth to breed much knowledg in him that is spoken to; and therefore it is a word of great respect and dependance.

She might well call him *Rabboni*; for he was *Master* of *Masters*, *Rabboni* of *Rabbonies*, the Angel of the Covenant, the great Doctor of the Church, the great *Gamaliel*, at whose feet all must sit, and be taught. So ye see what sense and affections are in these little words. The fulness of heart that was in this Couple cannot be expresst, were it possible to say all that could be said. And therefore we leave the Hypothesis, and come to make application of it to our selves.

Obser. 1. First, we may learn here, that till Christ himself discovers himself, no teaching will serve the turn. No, the teaching of Angels will not serve turn, till Christ himself by his holy spirit discovers himself; when Christ doth it, it is done. And therefore it should teach us so to attend upon the ministery, as to look up to the great Doctor, that hath his Chair in Heaven, and teacheth the heart. If he teach, it is no matter how dull the Scho-

Cathedram habet in cœlis qui corda docet

Scholar is. He is able to make an Scholar, if he instruct. I will not in large the point, because there be par ticular places, wherein they will b inlarged.

Observ. 2. The second thing I will observe i this; That Christ when he teacheth he doth it by words, not by Crucifixes, not by sights. We lost our salvation, and all our happiness by th ear, and we must come to it by th ear again. *Adam* by hearkening t *Eve*, and *Eve* to the Serpent, lost all and we must recover salvation there fore by the ear. As we have heard, so w shall see. We must first hear, and the see. Life cometh in at the eare, as we as death. Faith ye know is the quick ning of a Christian, the spiritual life of a Christian; now faith come by hearing. And therefore I beseech you in the bowels of Christ, set aside prejudice, and meekly attend God Ordinances. Do not consider who w are; we are but poor Ministers, frai men as your selves. But consider th Lord that is pleased to convey life and salvation, and grace, and what soever is fit to bring to Heaven th

Necessity of hearing

way

way: therefore they that despise this way, set light by salvation, as the Apostle saith, *Acts* 14. They judge themselves unworthy of the Kingdom of Heaven. They can read at home; but is that the way God hath sanctified? Did not the Manna stink, when gathered on the Sabbath day? There is a curse upon all private industry and devotion, when it is with neglect of publick Ordinances. She could have no comfort till Christ spake. Nay the very sight of Christ could not comfort her. Let this I pray you be enough, that I may not inlarge the point any further. This is the way for comfort. We must hear him in his Ministers here, if we will hear him comfortably speaking to us hereafter, *Come ye blessed of my Father, &c.* Note.

3. It was but one word. *Mary*; and is there so much force in one word? yea, when it is uttered by Christ. One word coming from Christ and set on the heart by the spirit of Christ, hath a mighty efficacy. The word had an efficacy in creating all things, *fiat, fuit*. Let it be done, it was Christ can easily comfort.

was done. Let there be light, the
was light. So let there be light in
understanding, and there it shall
presently. So in all Christs cures,
said the word, and it was done. So
all spirituall cures, let him say
word, it is done. Nay a very look
Christ, if the spirit go along with it,
able to convert the soul, *Respexit Christus, flevit Petrus amare*, Christ
lookt on *Peter*, he wept bitterly; what
will his word do, when his look will
do so much? It was but a word, and
but one word, *say but the word, saith he in the Gospel, and my Servant shall be healed.* This should make us desire
that Christ would speak, though but
few words to the soul; That he would
cloath the words of men mighty
with his word, and with his spirit,
and then they will be mighty in operation and works. One word, but it
was a pregnant word. It was full of
affection, she knew it well enough
Mary. What to call her so familiarly
so sweetly by her accustomed name
it wrought on her bowels presently.

4. But to go on, you see here again

the that Christ must begin to us before we can answer him. He began to *Mary*, and then she said *Rabbony*, all the passages of salvation are done by way of Covenant, by way of commerce and entercourse, between God and man; but God begins first. In electi-on indeed we choose him, but he chuseth us first. And he knoweth who are his, and we know him; but he knows us first. And in calling, we answer, I, but he calleth first, and we do but eccho to his call: in justification, forgivness of sins, we accept of justification, and submit to the righteousness of Christ, and Gods purpose of saving man that way; but he giveth faith first, for faith is the gift of God. We glorifie him here on earth, but it is from a result of Gods glorifying us in Heaven, some earnests we have, but they are of Gods giving. All we do, is but reflexion of his love first, or his knowledge first.

God is the beginner of all saving works

The Christian soul saith, *thou art my God*, I, but he saith first, *I am thy salvation*. As *Augustine* saith, *non frustra dicit anima, Deus, salus tua*, when God saith, *I am thy salvation*, it is eas-

sie for the soul to say, *thou art my Go*
And this may teach us in our devot
ons when we are to deal with Go
when we are to bring to him any
quest, to desire him first to reveal hi
self to us, desire Christ to reveal hims
by his spirit to us. It is an errour in
case of mens devotions; they thi
to bring something of their ow
strength, and to break in as it we
upon God, without his discove
first. But *Paul* saith, *Gal.* 4. 9. *
know God, or rather are known of hi*
We must desire, that he would ma
known his heart to us first, and th
we shall know him again, that t
would speak to us by his spirit, a
then we shall answer to him agai
That he would say to our souls, *he
our salvation*; and then we may h
claim to him, *he is our God.* Desire t
spirit of revelation to reveal his bo
els and love to us in Christ, by his h
ly spirit; for certainly, in every
turn of ours to Christ, God begins
us, all in all, though not so sensibl
but we ought to pray every day mo
and more for a sensible revelatio
that God would reveal his love to

in Christ. And we cannot but answer, if Christ saith, *Mary, Mary*, cannot but answer, *Rabboni*.

But you will say then, it is not our fault, but Christs fault if he must begin. If God begins, we shall answer. Object.

I answer briefly; That God doth alwayes begin to us, and is beforehand with us in all dealings with our selves. He giveth us many motions, and never withdraweth himself from us; but when he is despised, and slighted first: therefore let us take heed that we labour to answer Christs call, vvhen he doth call. If vve slight it, then in a judicious course, he ceaseth to speak further to us, if vve slight his beginnings of revelations. There be many degrees and passages to faith and assurance; if vve do not observe the beginning, hovv God begins to reveal himself to us by little and little, speaking to us by his spirit in our hearts vvhen he begins; then in a spirituall judgement sometimes he leaves us to our selves. And therefore let us regard all the motions of the spirit, and all the speeches of the spirit of Christ; for Answ.

The motions of the spirit must not be slighted.

he

he begins by little and little, else o
consciences will say afterward, w
are not saved, because we would n
be saved. We would not yield to
the passages of salvation; but wh
he was beforehand with us, and o
fered many sweet motions, yet w
loved our sins better then our soul
and so repelled all. Therefore I b
seech you do not refuse the swe
messages from Heaven, the gracio
and sweet motions of the spirit
Christ, make much of them. G
hath begun to you, be sure to a
swer. Learn it of *Mary*, when Chri
began, she set not her heart and in
delity against it, but she opened he
heart, and said, *Rabboni*; learn ther
fore the duty of spirituall obedienc
when God speaks, *speak Lord, for t*
Servant heareth. Do not shut you
eares to the motions of Gods bless
spirit, do not harden your hearts a
gainst his voice, but open your hear
as she did; *Rabboni.*

Alloquentii Christo fideles respondent.

1 Sam. 3. 10.

Our Saviour Christ here saith, *Ma*
ry, but when? after he had conceale
himself from her a long time. It is no
presently, *Mary*, nor *Rabboni*. He ha
con

Grace a graduall work.

cealed himself a great while. Christ doth not usually open himself fully at first, though at first he doth in some degree; but he observeth degrees, as in the church in generall. You see how that he discovers himself in his gracious promises by little and little, darkly at first, and at last the Sun of righteousnes ariseth clearly. So the day-starre ariseth in our hearts by degrees. It is a great while before *Mary* heareth the satisfying speech of Christ; *Mary*.

But why doth Christ thus conceal himself in regard of his fuller manifestation? Quest.

It is partly to try and exercise our faith, and other graces, and therefore God doth seem to withdraw himself in the sence of his love. Reasons why God defers mercy.

1. To see whether we can live by faith, or whether we be all together addicted to sense, as the world is, who live altogether by sense, and not by faith.

2. He would have our patience tryed to the utmost, he would have patience have its perfect work, she had much patience to indure all this; James 1.4.

But

but her patience had not a perf
work till Christ spake.

Mat. 15. Mark 7. 27. 28. 3. Christ will stir up, and quick
zeal and fervency in his Children; a
therefore he seemed to deny the w
man of *Canaan*; first he giveth
answer, but a harsh answer. *A Dog*
And she works upon it, though I
a *Dogge*, yet Dogs have crumbs.
which denyal was only to stir up
and earnestnes. And therefore thou
Christ doth not manifest himself
us at first, yet it is to stir up zeal a
affection, to seek after him more e
nestly. A notable passage there is
this, *Cant.* 3. 16. The soul sou
Christ, and sought long, and sou
in the use of all means; but at leng
she waited, and in waiting she fou
him.

4. Christ doth this for to s
greater price upon his presence, wh
he comes to make his presence hig
valued, when he doth discover hi
self. *Desideratа diu magis placen*
Things long desired please m
sweetly. And things, when want
are ingratiated to us, as warmth a
cold, and meat after hunger; and

in every particular of this life. And therefore God to ſet a greater price on his preſence, and that he would be held more ſtrongly, when he doth reveal himſelf, he defers a long time. That is one reaſon why he did defer revealing himſelf to *Mary*, that ſhe might have the more ſweet contentment in him, when he did reveal himſelf, as indeed ſhe had. Long deferring of a thing doth but inlarge the ſoule. Want inlargeth the deſire, and capacity of the ſoul, ſo doth love. Now when we want that we love, that emptieth the ſoul marvellouſly much, it mortifieth affection. When God keeps off a long time, and we ſee it is God only muſt do it, then the affection is taken off from earthly things, and the heart inlarged to God by love, and the want of the thing we love. And therefore we ſet a price on the thing; ſo that we are wonderfully pleaſing to God. It is very beneficiall to our ſelves. What loſt *Mary* by it? ſo ſhall we loſe nothing. We have it at laſt more abundantly; We have it as a mighty favour. *Mary* taketh this as a new bleſſing all toge-

ther. When things are kept long from us, & God only must discover. When the heart is kept from second causes, the heart is inlarged. Certainly, this comes from God, and God should have all the glory of it God is wise, and therefore makes us to stay a long time for that we do desire.

We all of us are in *Maries* case in spirituall sense, sometimes or other we misse Christ, I mean the sweet sense of Christ. Lay this down for a rule, that Christians ought to walk in sweet communion with God and Christ,& that it ought to be the life of a Christian to maintain the Cõmunion, that Christ hath vouchsafed between us and himself. Then certainly we lose Christ wonderfully, and not against our minds, but willingly by our own slighting of him, and by our own undervaluing of him, or by our negligence, and presumption. Christ though he be low, yet he is great, and he will have us to know his greatnes. There must be communion with due respect. One way or other, we deprive our selves of the sense & sweetnesse of communion with Christ.

Communion with Christ is the Christians life.

Wh

What muſt we do then? we muſt do as this woman did, turn over every ſtone, uſe all kind of means, leave not one, till we find him; and when all means are uſed, wait ſtill. Perſevere in waiting, as *Peter* ſpeaks. *Believers* wait, hold out in waiting, for Chriſt in his time will come, he cannot hold long. As *Joſeph* did ſuppreſſe his love and affection for politick ends a great while; but his pitty towards his Brethren was ſuch, that his bowels would not ſuffer him to conceal himſelf longer, his paſſion was above his policy. *I am Joſeph:* And ſo let us in the uſe of all things, ſeek Chriſt, and the ſweet ſenſe of his love which is better then life it ſelf. And indeed, what is all without Chriſt? Chriſt is ſo full of compaſſion, he will not long ſuffer us to be prolonged; but will at length ſatisfie the hungry ſoul: how many promiſes have vve to this end?

Directions to re-injoy Chriſt.

Gen. 45 3.

Pſal. 63.

Take heed of ſuch a temper of ſoul, as cares not vvhether vve find *Chriſt*, or no. Oh take heed of that, if vve vvill ſeek him, ſeek him as *Mary*, ſhe ſought him early in the

Caution.

Mat. 28.1. Mark 16.9 Luk. 24.1. Joh. 20.1.

morning, she brake her sleep, and sought him with tears. If any thing be to be sought with tears, it is Christ, and communion with him, she sought him instantly, and constantly, she sought him so, that no impediment could hinder her; she was so full of grief and love. She sought him with her whole heart, she waited in seeking, that is the way to find Christ. Seek him early, in our younger times, in the morning of our years. Oh that we could seek Christ, as we seek our pleasures; we should find more pleasure in Christ then in all the pleasures of the world; if we could perswade our base hearts so much. Seek him above all other things. Awake with this resolution in our hearts to find Christ, never to be quiet till we may say with some comfort *I am Christs, and Christ is mine.* When we have him, we have all, seek him with tears; at length we are sure to find him. He hath bound himself, that if we knock, he will open. And if we seek, we shall find. If we seek wisdom early with our whole hearts intirely sincerely, seek Christ, for Christ, and

then we ſhall be ſure to find him as ſhe did. Thus ſeek him in the word & Sacraments, wherein he diſcovers himſelf familiarly. Seek him in the Temple. *Chriſt was found in the Temple*, and then we ſhall be ſure to find him both here, and hereafter. Specially we ſhall find him in our hearts. You ſee how familiarly he comes to us in the word, ſpeaks to us by a man, like our ſelves. And how familiarly by the Sacrament, by common bread, and common wine, ſanctified to do great matters above nature, to ſtrengthen faith. He cometh to us through our faces, into our ſouls in the Sacrament. He cometh to us, through our ears in hearing the word, through our ſight in ſeeing the bread broken. He comes by familiar things, and by a familiar manner of conveying; as if he ſhould name every one, *I come to thee, and give thee my body*. Think with our ſelvs, now Chriſt cometh to me, when the Miniſter reacheth the bread and come to me, think of heavenly bread, & of the gift of Chriſt to me by means, & can he do it more familiarly? Is it not as if he ſhould ſay, *Mary?* and that is the ex-

Where to find him.

Luk. 2.46.

Chriſt conveyeth himſelf to us by the ear, and by the eye, firſt by the word and Sacraments.

The excellency of the Sacrament.

cellency of the Sacrament. It conveyeth Christ to all the Saints, and to every one in particular, as if he named every one. And what an incouragement is this to answer again, to open our hearts to receive him, together with the Elements; to imbrace Christ, joyn with Christ, and then to keep him, when we have him; do not lose him, he will not be so dealt withall, remember the Covenant we have made to him. I beseech you let these sweet considerations of Christ dwell in us, and work on every one of our hearts. If they do good on us here on earth, if we by faith lay hold on him, and have intercourse with him, what will it be in the day of judgement? How comfortable will it be to hear him say to every one in particular,

1 Cor 6.2. *Come thou, and thou, stand on my right hand, sit and judge the world with me?* Doth he know our names now on earth, and giveth to every one particularly by himself, if we come worthily? and will not he know us then? oh that is far more worth then the worlds good, to know us then, and to call us by our names. Therefore I beseech

ſeech you be acquainted with Chriſt. Have intercourſe (all we can) with him in the word and Sacraments, and never reſt, till we find this ſweet reſult in the uſe of the means, *That he is ours, and we are his.*

Take heed therefore in theſe times, deſperately addicted to formality and Popery, I ſay take heed we do depend not upon any outward thing; but look to Chriſt in all his Ordinances, look to the ſpirit; all Gods children, the church of the firſt born, they are θεοδίδακτοι, ſuch as are taught of God. Who can take away the oppoſite diſpoſition of mans nature to goodneſs, but God by his ſpirit? who can ſhine into the ſoul, and quicken the ſoul, but *Chriſt* by his ſpirit? who is above the heart and conſcience, but Chriſt by his ſpirit? therefore take heed of formality, ſubmit your hearts to the great Prophet of the Church, that *Moſes* ſpeaketh of, *Deut.* 18. who ſhall be the great teacher of the Church, lift up our hearts to him, that he would teach our hearts, and remove the naturall diſpoſition that is in us, that he would take off the

Caveat.

The teachings of Chriſt by his ſpirit are powerful, and cannot be reſiſted.

veil from our hearts, and teach n only what to do, but to teach the ver doing of them. Teach us to hate wh is ill; teach us to believe, and to r sist all Satans temptations; who c teach this, but the great *Teacher* whose Chair is in Heaven? therefo take heed of depending on formal things. Lift your hearts to God, th he would joyn his teaching with a other teaching. This cannot be to much stood upon, I beseech yo therefore take it to heart.

General promises must be particularly applied.

Give me leave to add a few thin more. If Christ speaketh in gener to *Mary*, she answereth in general And when he speaks aloof to her, s answereth aloof to him, a far off, an never gave him a direct answer, t he gave a direct word to her. Wh he said *Mary*, she gave him a direct a swer *Rabboni*, not before. I beseec you therefore, let us not rest in gen rall promises, and the generall grace that be so much stood on by som That God hath a like respect to a Trust not to that, we must not ent into his secrets; but let us obey h precepts and Commandements. An

with

withall remember this; When we hear of a generall mercy and Commandement for all Nations to believe, and that Chriſt came to ſave a world of ſinners, alas what is that to me, unleſs thou by thy holy ſpirit ſpeakeſt to my ſoul, and ſaiſt in particular, *I am thy ſalvation*, and ſpeakeſt familiarly to my ſoul. Generalls are in ſome degrees comfortable. But if I find not particular intereſt by the witneſs of thy holy ſpirit to my ſoul, if thou ſayſt not to my ſoul, *I am thine, and thou art mine*, all is to little purpoſe. Therefore in the deſires of our ſouls in prayer, let us deſire the Lord to reveal himſelf in particular. We truſt too much in Generalls. God is mercifull, and Chriſt came to redeem the World. They be truths, and good foundations for to found faith upon; but they will not do the deed, till by daily prayer vve ſeek to the Lord, that he vvould in a particular manner reveal himſelf to us. This doth *Paul* pray for, *Epheſ.* 1. That *God would vouchſafe to them the ſpirit of Revelation.* And this is the office of the holy Spirit, his ſpeciall office is, to reveal

Chriſts dying for ſinners, is no comfort to the ſoul, but by a particular application.

to

Spiritus Dei, & Dei, & hominis secreta cognoscit.

to every one in particular, his estate and condition to God-ward. The Holy Ghost knoweth the secrets in the brest of God, and in our own hearts. Now the Holy Ghost only can reveal the particular love that lyeth in Gods brest, to our particular soul. And therefore we should desire God that the holy spirit may be sent to seal to us our particular salvation, and never be quiet till we be sealed in particular assurance, that we be they whom Christ came to save. This we ought to labour for, if we labour for it, we shall have it, sometime or other; for God loveth to be familiar with his Children. He loveth not to be strange to them, if they seek his love, but to reveal himself first or last. And few seek it, but God revealeth himself by his spirit to them, before they die; if he doth not, they are sure of it in Heaven. And therefore they that be against particulars, they are enemies to their own salvation. *Mary* regarded not, while Christ spake of generalls. But when he came to particulars, then, *Rabboni*, and not before.

Jesus

Jeſus ſaith unto her, touch me not, I am not yet aſcended to my Father, &c.

This verſe containeth Chriſts *Prohibition*, or Chriſts *Commiſſion*, or *Charge*. His *prohibition*. *Touch me not*; and his reaſon, *for I am not yet aſcended to my Father*.

His *Charge*. *Go to my Brethren*. And then directeth what to ſay to them. *I aſcend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God*.

The words be very naturall, and need no breaking up to you. But I ſhall handle them, as they follow one another.

Jeſus ſaid to her, touch me not.

Touch me not. Why? he would have *Thomas* not only touch, but to put his finger into his ſide, that is more then touching him. But our Saviours intent is to meet with a diſpoſition in *Mary* ſomething carnall, ſomething low and mean, in regard of this glorious occaſion, Chriſt being now riſen and glorified; for his reſurrection was the firſt degree of his glorification. And therefore *touch me not*. She came with too much a carnall John 20. 27.

Love to Christ cannot be satisfied without the injoyment of Christ.

nall mind to touch him, when w
said *Rabboni*, it was not satisfact
on enough for her to answe
Rabboni; but she runneth to him
and claspeth him, and clingeth abou
him, as the affection of love di
dictate to her. But saith he, touch m
not in such a manner, this is not
fit manner for thee to touch me in
now I am risen again. In a word, sh
had a thought to converse wit
Christ, in as familiar a manner, as be
fore, when she powred oyntment o
his head. He was the same person, bu
the case is altered; that was in th
days of his humiliation, now he wa
risen again, and it was the first degre
of his glorification. There was ano
ther manner of converse due to him
and therefore, *touch me not*. Tho
thinkest to touch me as thou didst be
fore, but thou must not do it. She wa
too much addicted to his bodily pre
sence. 2. It is that, that men will labou
after, and have laboured for, eve
from the beginning of the world, t
be too much addicted to presen
things, and to sense. They will wor
ship Christ, but they must have
picture before them They will ador

Sense much affects carnal men.

Christ after his Resurrection is to be touched by faith, and not by sense.

Christ

Christ; but they must bring his body down into a peece of bread, they must have a presence. And so instead of raising their hearts to God and Christ in a heavenly manner, they pull down God and Christ to them; this the pride, and base earthlinesse of man will do. And therefore saith Christ, *touch me not*, in that manner; It is not with me now as it was before. We must take heed of mean and base conceits of Christ. What saith *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. I know no man now, according to the flesh, no, not Christ himself, now he is risen. Christ was of such a Tribe, Stature, had such gifts and qualities. What is that to me? Christ is now Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. He is glorious in Heaven, and so I conceive of him. I know no man after the flesh, no, not Christ himself. I forget what he was on earth, and think of him, what he is now in Heaven. Therefore to bring him down to our base conceits, to sense, and the like, this is the humour of men, that labour to crosse the scope of the Gospel. For why are men so addicted to outward things, outward com-

The Regenerate knoweth no man, no not Christ himself after the flesh.

complements? It is pride, it is satanicall pride; they think that God delighted with whatsoever their family is delighted withall. Because mongst men, there must be a deal doing: therefore they think God well pleased with such things. God is a spitit, and though outward things be necessary, yet all must not be turned outward, as in Popery. We must not bring God down to our foolish conceits, as if he were delighted, as we are.

Joh. 4.24.

2. It is wonderfull easie too; outward things, any naughty man have them with their sins. Let a man perform a little outward compliment, he may be what he will be, let him live as he will; and be possessed that outward things will serve the turn, he is safe, his Conscience daubed up, till God by sense of wrath awakeneth conscience, and then they shall find it another matter to deal with God then by compliment.

Externa dei placere nequeunt.

3. There is also a great glory in outward things. There is commendations, and mens observance of them

as in the Pharisees, and in Popery. But the spirituall worship of Christ hath no observance to the eye of the world, it is between God and the soul, men naturally love those things that be glorious. It is said of *Ephraim*, that he loved to tread out the Corn, but not to plow; that is, *Ephraim* will take that which is easie, but not that in Gods worship which is hard. There be two things in Gods service. An easie thing, which is outward complement. And an hard thing, which is, to trust him; to deny our selves, to relie upon him, and live by faith. And that *Ephraim* will not do. *Ephraim* will tread the corn, because the Heifer may eat corn. But there be hard things in Religion which he will not practice. He will not plough. Touch me not, saith Christ. Thou hast not conceits spirituall enough to deal with me, now I am risen.

Hos. 10. 11.

arduum & difficile est in fide vivere.

But what is the reason, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father*; That seemeth to be a strong reason. But it seemeth to be a contrary reason. Touch me not now, when my body is present, but touch me when I

Christ not to be touched, because not ascended.

am

am gone, and removed out of sight all flesh. Touch me not now, wh thou mayst touch me, and touch when there is an impossibility touching me. This is seeming strange; But indeed there is no co trariety in it. *Touch me not, for I not yet ascended to the Father.*

There is a double meaning of t words. First of all, *touch me not; fo am not yet ascended, &c.* Thou need not claspe, and cling about me, as i would stay no more with you belo *I am not yet ascended to the Fath* there will be time enough afterward For the word, touch, in the origina doth not signifie meerly to touch; b claspe, associate, joyn, and sod with a thing: the Scripture speaki of the evill man, you shall not tou him, that is, not make him one wi him. The Devill shall not take hi from Christ, and make him one wi himself. It is a strange word in the o riginall, Thou claspest about me, tho dost more then touch me, thou clin est to me, and wilt not leave me, as I would go presently to the Father but I am not yet ascended to the F

non solum significat tangere, sed ad hærere, cõglutinari. Esa. 52. 11. 2 Cor. 6. 17. *A tabernaculo im piorum hominum recedite.* Num. 16. 27.

ther. That is one part of the meaning.

But there is farther then that, *I am not yet aſcended to the Father, touch me not.* That is, it is another manner of touch that I look for, better for thee, and in ſome regard for me, to touch me by the hand of faith when I am aſcended to the Father, then touch me, and take thy full of touching me. But for the preſent I am not aſcended, I have not done all. I have not manifeſted my ſelf to my Diſciples in full, when I am aſcended, all is done, and then there is place for touch: And that I take is meant here, I am not yet aſcended to the Father, thou thinkeſt I have done all is to be done; but thou art deceived, I muſt aſcend to the Father, and when I am there, I expect to be touched after another manner, after a gratious ſpiritual manner, which is by faith, as *Auguſtine* ſaith, well, ſend up thy faith to Heaven, and then thou toucheſt Chriſt. As he ſaid in the Sacrament, *Quid paras dentem, & ventrem, Crede, & manducaſti:* what doſt thou prepare thy teeth and ſtomack for? believe, and thou haſt earen. So the

Mitte fidem in cælum, & tetigiſti.

the best communion with Christ is
believe, till we come to Heaven
have eternall communion with him
This touch will do thee little good
and it pleaseth me as little. When
am ascended to the Father, then to
me at the fall, so you see what Christ
meaneth.

The life of a Christian here, and
the manner of the dispensation
Christ here, is by promise, and by
spirit that we should live by faith,
not by sense. The life of sight is
served for another world, when
are fitted for it. She was not fit for
life of sense, but was to expect
Holy Ghost from Heaven, to be filled
with that, and then to be filled with
faith and love, and then to have
holy Communion with him in Heaven. But I *am not yet ascended.* That
you see the meaning, touch me
not.

There be two reasons of Christ's
prohibition. 1. Her respects were too
carnall and ordinary, considering
was in the state of glory. And then
2. for that there will be time enough
do not stand imbracing of me. The

a greater work for thee to do. Chriſts care of mourning ſouls.
hriſt preferred the great work of
ving notice to his Diſciples of his
eſurrection, before the Office of re-
ect, and ſervice to himſelf. Go a-
ut a duty, that I more regard a
eat deal. *Go tell my Brethren*, I *aſ-*
nd, &c. So that every part of the
ext yields ſatisfaction to that *prohi-*
on.

Go (ſaith he) *to my Brethren*, I have
other work for thee to do. *Touch me*
not, Thou claſpes about me as if thou
adſt nothing to do: there is another
ork to do that pleaſeth me better,
nd more fit for thee, to comfort
em that are in diſtreſs, my poor
ethren and Diſciples. And therefore
to my Brethren, and ſay unto them,
that Chriſt prefers a work of cha-
ty to his poor Diſciples, before a
ork of complement to his own per-
n. She clingeth about him, but this
not it I would have. Thoſe poor
ouls are mourning and diſconſolate
or me, as if I were clean taken away,
o to them, and prevent their farther
orrow.

God hath a wonderfull reſpect to
others.

others. It is strange that Christ shou
say, Go, and be reconciled to thy
thren, and then offer thy sacrifice
if he would have his own sacr
Charity. neglected, rather then we should
be reconciled to others. And
work of charity and love is pref
before an officium and compl
to himself. Let us shew our lo
the first Table in the second, our
Mat. 5. 24. to God by our love to man. E
thing hath its measure and time
way therefore with this over-m
imbracing and touching. Go thy
thou hast another work to do,
my Brethren; And so you see (as I
it) the full meaning of
words.

Observe the circumstances.
must go? Here is a Commission,
command. And to whom? To
Disciples of Christ. And when
Christ bid her go? when he was
and in the first estate of glory.
is the Message? *Tell my Brethren,*
ascending to my Father, and your
ther; to my God, and your God.
worth your considering a little.

1. Who is sent. A *woman*, a *woma*

he Apostle of the Apostles, to be the cher of the great Teachers of the rld. *Mary Magdalen* was sent to in- ct the Apostles in the great Articles Christs Resurrection and Ascension Heaven. By a Woman death came the world, and by a woman life preached to the Apostles; because eed she was more affectionate, and ction taketh all. And that makes t sex more addicted to Religion, the advantage of their affection; for ligion is meerly a matter of affecti- : though it must have judgement e before it, yet it is especially in heart and affections. And she had wed a great deal of affection, she od out when the rest went away, *hn* 19. 25. She was constant, and oke through all difficulties, and n God honoured her to be the first eacher of his Resurrection.

God uses weak instruments to effect great matters.

Gods course is to trust secrets in then Vessels, that earthen Vessels ould carry heavenly treasure, and erefore stick not at the Vessel; but ok to the Treasure. A woman may ach the greatest Apostle. Look not the man, but to the Message. *Elias* will

2 Cor. 4. 7.

will not refuse the meat becau
1 King. 17. 4. *Raven* brought it. And a
demned man will not re
pardon, becauſe a mean
bringeth it. Take off pri
ſpirituall reſpects. When God
nours any man to bring news
conciliation, ſtoop to him, of
condition ſoever he be.

2. To whom muſt ſhe go? *G my Brethren* the Apoſtles. Go t Apoſtles that are diſconſolate now Orphans, deprived of their ſter and Lord. Diſconſolate me not in vain, ſo not without cauſ they had reaſon to be diſcomfo not only for their want of Chriſt for their own ill carriage tow Chriſt. One of them denyeth him the reſt forſake him; and yet *my thren, go tell my Brethren.*

When did he ſpeak this? after Reſurrection in the ſtate of glory the beginning of it, and when aſcending to Heaven, and yet he eth them as Brethren, though Brethren, as had dealt moſt un therly with him.

Queſt. Anſw.

But how came they to be his

hren? And how come we to be Chriſts Brother? Chriſt is the firſt orn of many Brethren; He is the on of God by Nature; and all o- hers, now, by grace and adoption. Chriſt is the *Primo-genitus*, amongſt any brethren, and in Chriſt, we ave one Father with Chriſt. We have ne honour, we ſhall be all Kings, and eirs of Heaven, as he is. If Sons, then eirs: the Apoſtle makes the cohe- ence, Now we are all in Chriſt, Sons God, Heirs with him. To go to he condition of nature that he took, ur nature, and therefore having our eſh, he is our Brother. The very eprobate may ſay ſo. Yet that is a round of comfort, that he is a man as e are, but that is not the main thing onſiderable. He is our Brother in a piritual reſpect, in regard of adop- ion. He is the firſt Son of God, and e in him Sonnes. He is the firſt Heir f God, and we in him are Heirs. nd therefore *go to my Brethren.*

Rom. 8. 29

Rom. 8. 17

Heb. 2. 14.

Chriſt not aſhamed to be neerly related to us.

Beloved, It is a point of marvel- ous comfort, that Chriſt was not a- hamed to call them Brethren, *Pſal.* 22. 22. *I will declare thy name amongſt*

thy

by brethren, saith Christ. Our Savi
Christ alludeth to that Psalm in t
passage, and so it is read, 2 *Heb.* o
of that Psalm. Christ hath taken
relations (that are comfortable) u
on him, towards us. *He is the e*
lasting Father, Isai. 9. The Princ
peace. He is a second *Adam*, a
therefore a Father in that regard. T
first *Adam* is the Father of all that
rish. The second A*dam* is the Fat
of all that shall be saved. As he
our Brother, so our Husband.
could not be our Husband, except
Joh. 15. 15 were our Brother. He must take
nature, and be one with us, before
can be one with him. He is our frie
before this time he called th
friends. As you see in *John*, I *will*
you friends. But here is a swee
1 Cor. 11. 3 tearm Brethren. There is no relati
1 Cor. 12. 27. that hath any comfort in it,
Ephes. 5. 23. Christ hath taken it on him. He
John 2. our head, Husband, friend, Fath
Revel. 22. Brother, and whatsoever can com
comfort to us. And the truth of it
he is these things more truly then
Relation is made true on earth.
these Relations of Husband a

W

Wife, and Brother and Sister, and Father and Child, are but shadows of that everlasting relation that Christ hath taken upon him; the reality and truth it self is in Christ. We think there is no Brother, but the Brother in flesh, no Father, but Father in flesh. Alas, these are but shadows, and quickly cease, the fashion of the world passeth away. Brother is another Relation whereof these are but shadows. These do but represent the best things that are in Heaven: Christ is the Father, Brother, Friend, and whatsoever is comfortable in Heaven; therefore *go, tell my brethren.*

Object. I, but saith the poor soul, I that have been so sinfull, and so unworthy a wretch, shall I have comfort in this, Answ. that Christ is my Brother, and I am Christs? I cannot do it. I profess thou canst not do it, flesh and blood must not teach it thee, thou must be taught by the spirit of Christ; but consider how the Apostles used Christ. Thou canst not call Christ Brother, because thou hast been a sinner, and hast carried thy self unkindly to Christ. And did not the Disciples so?

Relation to Christ must not be denyed because of sin.

did not they leave him, and one of them deny him, and that with Oaths. Therefore whatsoever our sins have been, deny not our relation to Christ. The poor Prodigal said, I *am not worthy to be called a Sonne*, I am not worthy to be called a Servant. He denyed not that he was a Sonne, but he was unworthy of it. And so are unworthy to be a spouse and brother of Christ, yet do not our unfaithfull hearts to much pleasure, as to deny our relation.

Luk. 15. 21

The Apostles were so dignified, as to be called the *Pillars of the world*, but these left him, and yet for all that in this time of their desertion of him, *go tell my brethren*. Therefore be not discouraged, go to Christ in our worst condition, in our greatest temptations, when our hearts misgive us most, that we have used God most unkindly, and Satan ply'd us most with desperate temptations, yet own him for our brother, who owned his Disciples, when they dealt most unkindly with him. I beseech you count it a comfort unvaluable, which no tongue is able to express, the

Tentatio, est ad Christum eundi opportunitas, ut nobis succurrat.

Chri

Christ after his Resurrection, should call *brethren*. He might well call them brethren after the Resurrection, because then all debts were discharged by his death. He had paid their debts, and now the acquittance was due to them, because Christ, as surety, had payd all. Now I am risen, *go, and tell my brethren so*. If we can make use of the death and Resurrection of Christ, and say, Christ hath dyed for my sins, and rose again for my justification; I will interest my self in his death, I will claim the vertue of his Resurrection, then take the comfort of this. In Popery they had much comfort in those dark times, when a Company of proud carnall beastly men ruled the roast according to their own lusts, these Clergymen made a great pother with fraternity and brotherhood. And if they were of such a fraternity of *Dominick* or *Francis*, or meerly in a Fryars Coule; it was not only satisfactory, but meritorious, they could not do amisse, away with these shadows. Here is the brotherhood that must comfort Christians, that Christ owned us for brethren after his Resurrection.

Vanity of Popery & Popish Orders.

rection. He payd dear for it, alas, are we worth so much, that God should become man to die for us, to rise again for us, to justifie us, and make us brethren? That infinite love, that God became man, and dyed for us, and rose again to own us for his brethren, will satisfie all doubts. Shall we doubt any thing of that love, when he out of his free love, will own us as brethren, shall not we own him? I confesse it is a marvellous thing, in times of temptation it is difficult to make use of it. Oh, but pray with the good Apostle, Lord increase our faith; with the poor man in the Gospel, I *believe, Lord help my unbelief.* So when any temptation cometh for our unworthiness, and our undeserving; then think Christ after his Resurrection call'd his Apostles brethren, and he will be content to be my brother, if I will believe, he dy'd for me, and I will cast my self upon him; therefore away with all doubts.

Mark 9.24

Relyance on Christs comforts.

There be many other observations out of the words. Will you have the first words in estate of glory, his first words after death? *go and tell my brethren.* Think in a desperate extremity

ty, think of the sweet message he sent by *Mary Magdalen* to his unworthy *brethren*, that he had dy'd for, and given his blood to make them his brethren. Think of his free love to you, it is not for your worthiness or unworthiness, but of his own free love that he came from Heaven to take your nature, it is his own free love that he came to die; and therefore conceive not of worthiness, nor unworthiness; but consider the command of God to believe, and if we perish, perish there. Cast our selves on our brother, that will own us in our worst condition, that is the grand use. The consideration of Christs free grace and love keeps from desperation.

2. Again, if God owns us in his glorious condition, shall we be ashamed of the Doctrine of Christ, of the Children of God, to own them? what saith Christ? It is a terrible Thunderbolt; He that is ashamed of me, and of my word before men, I will be ashamed of him before my heavenly Father. Take heed of being ashamed to stand out a good cause, in matters of Religion. Christ was not ashamed to call us brethren when we were at the worst, and he himself in a glori- A Christian is Confessor. Mark 8 38

ous condition; he was in glory, and the Disciples drooping in consideration of their guilt, that they had forsaken him, and yet brethren still. And shall not we own him, that owneth us in state of glory? how shall we look that he will own us hereafter, when he trusteth us with his cause and glory, and we betray all to pleasure such and such? Can we look Christ in the face with comfort, if we neglect his cause, his truth and his Church?

Deserting of Christ is betraying of him

3. Again make this use of it, Christ is our Brother, and will not he take our parts. *Absolon* was a disobedient Son, yet *Absolon* would not let his Sister *Tamar* be abused, he would be revenged of that. And will Christ suffer his sister, his spouse, his Church to be abused long? nay, will he leave his Dove, his love, his undefiled one, where he hath placed all his joy, and contentment to the malice and fury of the enemy long? certainly he will not. Certainly he will be avenged on his enemies. If nature that he hath put into the wicked sinfull men, teach them to revenge indignities offered to their

Comfort in that Christ is our Brother.

their kindred, will Chriſt ſuffer his Brethren, his ſiſter to be abuſed. *Saul, Saul,* why perſecuteſt thou me? now he is in Heaven, the Churches caſe is his own. And therefore comfort our ſelves with that ſweet Relation, Chriſt hath undertaken to be our brother in ſtate of glory; what a comfort is it that we have a brother in Heaven? what a comfort was it to the poor *Patriarks*, when they thought with themſelves, we have a brother, *Joſeph*, that is the ſecond man in the Kingdom. And ſo, what a great comfort is it, for poor Chriſtians to think, that the ſecond in Heaven, that ſitteth at Gods right hand, that is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and that ruleth all, is our brother. Is not this a main comfort, yea beyond all expreſſion, if we could make uſe of it by faith, anſwerable to our trouble. Therefore go to *Joſeph*, that hath laid up comfort for us, he hath comfort enough for us, he hath treaſures of comfort, whatſoever is neceſſary for us; we may have in Chriſt our elder brother. And therefore, *go to my brethren.*

Chriſt in glory owns his Churches Cauſe.

Use of exhortation by faith to labor to be one with Christ.

I beseech you, let us make a use of exhortation to be stirred up, to labor by faith to be one with Christ, and then he will be our head, our Husband, our brother, our friend, our all. Say what you can, Christ will be all in all to all his. He hath enough in him, *of his fulnesse we shall receive, and grace for grace.* Oh labour to be one with Christ. Do not lose such comfort as is offered. He offereth himself first to be our Saviour and Redeemer, and then our brother, never rest therefore till we have part in Christ. And then labour to make use of in all temptations, catch fast hold of every thing that is usefull, as it is the nature of faith to do, like *Benhadads* Servants, who made use of that word *brother.* He is my *brother* said the King of *Israel*, as common Offices make kindred. He had but let passe the terme of *brother*, and they would not let it go, but catcht at it, thy brother *Benhadad.* We see what wisdom flesh and blood can teach, to make an improvement of any comfort in the world, if by kindred, or office, or any relation in the world they make use of them.

John 1. 16

Faiths usual work.

And when we be in Christ, shall not we make use of them, when we be troubled with sense of sin, or in desperate conditions? when Christ calleth us *brother*, shall not we answer, *I am thy brother?* Blessed be thy mercy and love that descended so low, as to make me thy brother. I beseech you let us not lose the comforts we may have in the Disciples, being called Christs Brethren, when they were in some sort enemies, but he knew their hearts were sound, and it was but their weakness: therefore let no weakness discourage thee. He will not quench the smoaking flax, nor break the bruised Reed. Is thy heart right to Christ, art not thou a false Hypocrite, a secret Traitor to Christ, and to his cause and Church? then be of good comfort, thou mayst go to Christ, as to thy brother. Though *Peter* denyed him with his mouth, yet he confest him with his heart. And therefore, *go tell my Disciples and Peter*, he hath most guilt, and therefore hath most need of comfort. Be thy guilt never so great, if thou wilt come into Covenant with God, here is mercy for thee,

Christs calling his Disciples brethren, adds much to our comfort.

and therefore make this use of it. Never forget in your worst condition that may be, since Christ will stoop so low to own you to be brethren, to make use of it, if your hearts be right towards him.

Go to my brethren; now I come to the *Commission*, or *Charge* given to her. *Go to my brethren*; who is the party charged? *Mary:* And what is her *charge?* to *go to the Apostles* under the sweet tearm of *brethren*; Why doth he call them so? after his Resurrection, when he was in the state of glory: what is the Message? it is very sweet. Go, say to them, I *ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God.* I *ascend*, that is, I presently am to ascend, in a very short time I shall ascend. It was but forty dayes between Easter and the Ascension; and all that time *Christ* appeared now and then. It is the nature of faith, where it is glorious, for to present future things, as if present; especially when they be near. I *ascend*, that is, I shall very shortly ascend, and it is all one, as if I ascend presently. To whom do I ascend? I *ascend to my Father.* To *my Father*, that is not com-

Faith presents things to come, as present.

comfort enough, therefore *to your Father too*; I *ascend to God*, that is not comfort enough: therefore *to my God and your God*. We shall unfold the words as we come at them.

First *Mary Magdalen* a woman, a sinner, is used in the great work of an Apostle, to be an Apostle to the Apostles. I would there were that love in all men to teach what they know, and that humility in others to be instructed in what they know not. It were a sweet conjunction, if it were so. She was a mean person to instruct the great Apostles. But beloved, where there is a great deal of love, there they will teach what they know: and where there is humility, there they will be taught what they know not, though they be never so great. And God will humble the greatest, to learn of the meanest sometimes: therefore he sendeth *Mary* to the Apostles.

Love teacheth what it knowes.

Humility will be instructed in what it knowes not.

I beseech you in matters of salvation stand not on tearms. Let us take truth from Christ, let us see God and Christ in it, see our own comfort in it, not stand upon persons. *Aquila* and

Pris-

Priscilla teach the great men knowledg. And so it is; sometimes mean persons are honored to be instruments of great comforts to persons greater then themselves. She is to go to the Apostles under the name of Brethren, *Go tell my Brethren.* And she must go to the Apostles that were Christs Brethren, and owned to be so now when he was in glory, when he was risen, and exempt from all his former abasements of the Crosse and grave, where he was held captive three dayes under the dominion of sin; when he was freed from all enemies of salvation, and had triumphed over all. *Go tell my Brethren.* So you see there is a sweet affinity and nearness between Christ and his. Christ took our nature on him for this end, he became flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, that we spiritually might be flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone. It is no comfort at all, an inducing comfort it is, but no actuall present comfort, that Christ was incarnate for us; for all the world might have comfort in that, *Turks, Jews, Pagans*, that had the nature of

Christ ascended into glory, forgets not his people in debasement.

of man in them. And all have some comfort in it, as their nature is dignified, and that he took not on him the nature of Angels, but the nature of man, his spouse, his Church it is, that hath the comfort of it. Therefore it is not sufficient, that he be bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; but we must be bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. We must be ingraffed, and baptized into him by faith, and then the tearm holdeth, and never till then, so that there is a sweet nearness betwixt Christ and his. *Brother* is a most comfortable relation. It is comfort that he took our nature upon him, that God would take dust, and ashes, earth into the unity of his person, for God to become man is a great dignifying of mans nature; but to take not only our nature on him; but to take our person particularly near to him, thou, and thou to be a Member of Christ, there is the honor of it. It induceth us to come to Christ that hath loved our nature so much. But the other is an actual present comfort, when we can say, I am my Beloveds, & my Beloved is mine. Our hearts are too narrow a great deal

It is the highest honor to be a member of Christ.

deal to imbrace the whole comfo
that this word affords unto us. Th
Christ should own us as his Broth
after his Resurrection; for that she
eth a reconciliation. Brother is
tearm of friendship, nay more then
tearm of reconciliation, for a m
may be reconciled to an enemy; b
it is a tearm of amity, to shew th
when we believe in Christ, and a
one with him, our sins are quitte
death is overcome, Satans head
crushed when God is reconcile
What have they to do with us? th
are only to serve our turns to br
us to Heaven, and fit us for it. I
beech you consider of the excell
freedom and dignity of a Christi
his freedom, in that he is the Brot
of Christ, free from all, being own
by Christ after his Resurrection,
being quit by his death, who w
our surety, else he should have been
the grave to this day. And then th
of our dignity, to be Brother to hi
that is King of Heaven, Lord
Lords, Ruler of the whole world, th
hath all things subject to him. O th
our hearts were inlarged to conce
th

By faith in Christ both sin, death and hell are overcome.

The freedom of a Christian.

The Christians dignity.

the wonderful comfort that every Christian hath in this Relation. *Go tell my Apostles* under the sweet tearm of *Brethren.*

Who art thou, will Satan say, flesh and blood a peece of earth, wretched Sot, wilt thou claim kindred of Christ? Satans Objection.

I, saith the Christian-believing soul. It is true, if it were my own worthiness, it were another matter; but shall I give him the lie, when he owned me for his Brother after his Resurrection, shall I deny the Relation? therefore never believe Satans tempting words and sinful flesh; for Satan cometh to us in our own flesh, and maketh us think God and Christ to be such and such. I but what saith Christ himself, believe him and not Satan, that cometh to thee in thy own despairing, dark, doubting flesh. Believe the word of Christ, who calleth thee *Brother*, if thou believest in him, and castest thy self upon him. The Christians Reply. Christ to be believed, and not Satan.

This sheweth the dignity of a Christian, when he is once in Christ, the excellent, super-excellent transcen-

cendent glory of a christian. Wh
they told our Saviour Christ, that
Mother and Brethren were to spe
with him; saith he, they that hear
word, and do it, they are my Broth
and Sister, and my Mother. This
the excellency of a christian that h
of so near a kin to Christ. When
believe Christ, it is all one, as if
conceived Christ, as if we were Br
thers to Christ, as if we were of
neareſt kindred to him. Nay it
more, he preferreth Mother, befo
Mother, Brother, before Broth
ther; Mother in spirit, before Moth
in the flesh, and Brother in spirit,
fore all other Brothers. Therefore
excellent thing to be a christian.

Mother, and brother in spirit, is preferred before mother and brother in the flesh.

When once a Christian giveth hi
self to *Christ*, and denyeth his o
doubting despairing heart, (which
the greateſt enemy he hath;

1. Then what belongeth to him
then God is his, and Christ is his;
must have an inheritance, he is fello
Heir without, all are his.

2. What carrieth he in him?
carrieth in him the spirit of the F
ther and the Son, and the graces

of the spirit which make him lovely to God.

3. What cometh from him? Having the pretious graces of the Holy Ghost in him, what can come from him as a christian, but grace and comfort to others. He is a Tree of righteousnes, and what can come from a good Tree, but good fruit? so far he is so.

So if you regard what belongeth to them, what is in them, the inheritance they shall have, or what cometh from a christian, that is, Brother of *Christ*, he is an excellent person, more excellent then his Neighbour: there is no man in the world, never so great, but is a base person in comparison of a christian. What will all be ere long? if a man be not in *Christ*, these things will add to our vexation. It will be a misery to have had happines, the greater will be the misery, when they must be parted withall. And therefore raise your hearts to consider of the excellent condition of a christian, when he is once the Brother of *Christ*.

Christians are fruitful Trees of righteousnesse.

I confes it is an hidden dignity, as

Paul

Paul saith, our life is hid w
Christ in *God*. We have a life, a gl
ous life, but it is hid. It is dark, so
times under melancholy, sometim
under temptations, sometimes u
the afflictions of the world, and
grace, and so it is an hidden excell
cy; but it is a true excellency.
world knoweth us not more t
they know God, and Christ; bu
is no matter, God knoweth u
name, He knew *Mary* by na
as it is said in *Isaiah*, *I h*
called thee by name. He is a *Shephe*
that knoweth his sheep by name,
is known of them. He knoweth t
and thee, and thee, by name, yea,
the hairs of thy head are numb
and therefore it matters not, tho
thy dignities be hid with the wo
yet God knoweth them, he h
written all thy members in a bo
and he hath a book of remembr
of thee. And therefore it is no ma
though it be an hidden dignity, i
true dignity to be a brother of C

The world knowes not the excellency of Gods people, and therefore regards them not.

Let us oppose this to the disg
of the world, and to all temptat
of discouragement whatsoever. W

e all diſcouragements to this? they ll all before this, that we are the ns of God, and Brethren of Chriſt. hat can diſcourage a man that is us apprehenſive of this Excellency on good tearms. I will inlarge the oint no further, but leave it to your wn meditations, and the ſpirit of od work with it.

Go to my Brethren. When doth he d her go? now after his Reſurrecti-, when he was to aſcend to Heaven. he firſt degree of his glory was his eſurrection, after his loweſt abaſe- ent in the grave. You ſee that ho- ur doth not change Chriſts diſpo- ion; as it doth amongſt men, when ey be advanced to great places, they ill not look on their old friends and quaintance; but Chriſt had no ch diſpoſition, he owneth his poor iſciples in their greateſt abaſements.

The conſtancy and humility of Chriſt.

o tell my Brethren. Now, when he as in ſtate of glory, ready to go to eaven, and he giveth them a more mfortable title now, then ever be- ore. In the Goſpel he called them *ervants* and *friends* and *Apoſtles* and *Diſciples*; but now *Brethren*, a word of

of all sweetness, and nothing
sweetness. *Go tell my brethren* pre
ly, Christ would have no delay
he saw they had present need. C
Christ speedy in comforting.
love is a quickening love, and
fruits of it are very speedy. The
more then angelicall swiftne
Christ, when there is need of
God helpeth at need, in the mos
sonable time, and he knoweth
time best of all. He did but rise i
morning, and the very same day
tell my Brethren: ye have *Cant.*2.
Christ cometh leaping upon
Mountains, when he was to he
Church, he leaped over the M
tains, as in the eight verse. The
of my Beloved, behold he co
leaping upon the Mountains, skip
upon the Hills. He cometh from
ven to Earth, from the Earth t
Grave, and now he is risen, he
in hast, he maketh no stay, be
his manner of dispatch, is, to
and comfort by the Ministry of ot
God quickly, do not stand imbra
of me, but *go and tell my Brethren*
Object.
But why then do not we find
fort sooner, that are afflicted.

Beloved, where is the fault? Is it in Christ? you stand out at staves end with Christ, you will not imbrace Comforts when they be offered, or you be not sufficiently humbled; he is wise, as he is swift, he knoweth which be the best times. Answ.

You see then, that Christ (as soon ever it is fit for him) he will come. He should come sooner, he would come too soon; if afterward it would too late. He is the best discerner of times and seasons that can be, and therefore wait his leasure. If thou want comfort, humble soul, whatsoever thou art, wait his leasure, certainly he knoweth the best time, and when the time is come, he will come. That will come shall come, there is no question of that. Christ takes his own time to comfort the humble soul.

Now as he sent her in all hast, preferring it before any Complement to his own person; so it is a constant love: as it is a quick love, that God bears to his Children, so it is a constant, invincible love. They had dealt most unbrotherly with him; for every one had forsaken him, and *Peter* had denyed him: yet *go, tell my Brethren.* Christs love constant.

thren. One would think this would have quenched this fire, unkind, and unbrotherly dealing would have quenched this love in Christs breast. It is true, if it had been the meer love of man, it had been something; but it was the love of the infinite person, that took our nature out of love, and therefore it was a constant and invincible love; nothing could conquer it, not the thoughts of their unkind dealings, no not their denying and forsaking of him. Still, *go, tell my Brethren. Love is strong as death.* Death could not hold Christ in the grave, but love held him on the Crosse. When he came to the work of our Redemption, love had held him on earth; but when he was in the grave, it brake through there. Indeed, it was stronger than death in Christ.

Question. Why is Christs love so constant, so invincible, that nothing can alter it?

Resol. The ground of it is, it is free love. It fetcheth the ground of his love from his own heart, not from our worthiness, or unworthiness, but from his own freedom, and Gods eternal

poſe. God hath purpoſed to ſave ſo many, and thoſe, and no more he loveth to Chriſt to ſave. And God looketh on his own purpoſe, and Chriſts free love, and that is the ground of all. And therefore whom he loveth, he loveth to the end, because he looked on us in his election. The Lord knoweth who are his, the foundation is ſo ſure, if once we be Gods, we are ever Gods. For Chriſt looks on us in Gods election: therefore if ever he ſheweth his love to us, it is ſince his love, and for ever his love. If any thing in man could hinder it, it would have hindered it at our firſt converſion, when we were at worſt, even enemies; if nothing could hinder then, what can hinder it afterwards? the Apoſtle reaſoneth ſtrongly, *Rom.* 5. 10. *If we be reconciled by his death, much more will he ſave us by his life.* If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, now much more being reconciled, ſhall we be ſaved by his life. when we had no goodneſs, but oppoſition, and rebellion in us, we were ſaved by his death, Chriſt is much more

Gods love is conſtant becauſe grounded on his own eternall purpoſe.

Fundamenta tamen ſtant inconcuſſa Syonis.

Chriſt by death reconciles us, by his life he ſaves us.

NOTE

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more able to save us now by his triumphing over death, and be glorious in the Heavens.

Obj. Oh, but saith the poor soul, I a poor weak Creature, and ready fall away every day.

Answ. I, but Christs love is constant, wh he loveth, he loveth to the end. W saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 8. neit things present, nor things to co shall be able to separate us from love of Christ; and therefore

Trusting in Christ takes off trouble.

strong in the Lord, and in the po of his might, do not trust to y selves, nor trouble your selves things to come. If thou be free f guilt of former sins, never ques time to come, God is unchangeabl his nature, unchangeable in his lo He is *Jehovah*, *I am* alwayes, n *was*, or *will be*, but *I am alwayes* ever he loved thee, he will love t for ever. You see the constancy Christs love, *go tell my Brethren*; when they had most deeply offen him, they were Renegadoes, hav all left him, and then when he most need of their comfort, being greatest extremity, and yet *go tell Brethren.*

Beloved, let us not lose the comfort of the constancy and immutability of Christs love. Let us conceive that all the sweet links of salvation are held on Gods part strong, not on ours, the firmness is on Gods part, not on ours. Election is firm on Gods part, not on ours. We chuse indeed as he chuseth us; but the firmness is of his chusing: so he calleth us, we answer; but the firmness is of his action. He justifieth, we are made righteous, but the firmness is of his imputation. Will he forgive sins to day, and bring us into Court, and damn us to morrow? no, the firmnesse is of his action. We are ready to run into new debts every day; but whom he justifieth, he will glorifie. The whole chain so holdeth, that all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth cannot break a link of it; whom he calleth, he will justifie and glorifie: therefore never doubt of continuance, for it holds firm on Gods part, not mine, God imbraceth us in the arms of his everlasting love, not that we imbraced him first. When the Child calleth not, it is from the Mothers holding the Child, and not from the

The links of salvation hold firm on Gods part.

Childs holding the Mother. So it is Gods holding of us, knowing of us, imbracing of us, and justifying of us, that maketh the state firm, and not ours; for ours is but a reflexion, and result of his, which is unvariable. The sight of the Sun varieth, but the Sun in the Firmament keepeth alwayes his constant course: so Gods love is as the Sun invariable, and for ever the same. I only touch it, as the foundation of wonderful comfort, which they undermine that hold the contrary.

Gods love unalterable.

The next point is, that Christ chose *Mary* to go tell his Brethren, and under the sweet title of Brethren, to deliver this sweet message, *I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God, and your God.* He telleth them the sweetest words in the worst time.

This point differeth from the former thus. The former was, that Christs love is constant, and alwayes the same; but now Christ not sheweth his love when we are most cast down, in the worst times, if our casting down be with repentance. He never said *Brethren* before, but reserved the tearm of *Brethren* for the worst

In darkest times Christ is near to comfort.

worst time of all. The sweetest discoveries of Christ are in the worst times of all to his Children. Mothers will bring out any thing to their Children that is sweet & comfortable to them in their sickness; though they frowned on them before, yet the exigency of the Child requires it when there is need, any thing cometh out that may please the Child. The poor Disciples were not only in affliction, being the scorn of the world, the Shepheard being smitten, and the sheep scattered: but their inward grief was greater, they were inwardly confounded, and ashamed to see Christ come to such an end, they were full of unbelief, though Christ had told them, he would rise again, they could not believe; and so what with fear, and what with doubt, and what with grief for their using of Christ so unkindly, and leaving him, certainly they were in a perplexed and disconsolate condition: yet now, *go and tell my Brethren.* We see then, that after relapses, when we be in state of grace, to deal unkindly with Christ, must needs be matter of grief and shame; yet if we be humbled for it,

Simile.

Note.

and cast down, even then Christ hath a sweet message for us by his holy spirit. *Go tell my Brethren.* In the *Canticles*, The Church, the spouse of Christ, had dealt unkindly with Christ, by losing him and forsaking him. Chap. 3. 5. In the third Chapter she had lost him, and sought him on her bed, but found him not, she rose, and went to the watchmen, and then went through the City, but found him not, at length she found him, whom her soul loved. Then Christ speaks most sweetly and comfortably to her in the beginning of the fourth Chapter; but especially in the sixth Chapter, after she had dealt most unkindly with Christ. He standeth at the door knocking and waiting, till his locks dropt with rain, in resemblance of a Lover that standeth at the door, and is not suffered to come in. Afterward he leaveth her for this unkindness, yet not so, but that there was some sweet relish left upon the door. God always leaveth something in his Children to long after him, and at length after much longing, Christ manifesteth himself sweetly to her, Chap. 6. 4. and breaketh out. *Thou art beautiful*

The Churches care to find her beloved.

Christs sweet and comfortable speech to his beloved.

O my love as Tirzah, *comely as* Jeruſalem, *terrible as an Army with banners, turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me, thy hair is as a flock of Goats, &c.* and ſo goeth on, *my ſpouſe Love, my Dove, my undefiled one.* He could not ſatisfie himſelf in the commendations of his Church, being as it were overcome with love. And this ſheweth, that after we have dealt unkindly with Chriſt, and our conſciences are aſhamed, and abaſhed with it, as it is fit they ſhould, yet if we will wait awhile, and be content, not be deſperate, nor yield to temptation; if we ſtay but a while, Chriſt will manifeſt himſelf to us, and ſhew that he valueth, and prizeth the hidden graces, we cannot ſee; he can ſee gold in oare. He can ſee hidden love, and hidden faith and grace, that we cannot ſee in temptations, and he will manifeſt all at length, and ſhew his love when we ſtand moſt in need of it. We ſee it in *David*, who was deeply humbled for his folly with *Bathſheba*; for there was not one, but many ſins, as murder and adultery, *&c.* yet being now humbled,

Chriſts high commendations of his

bled, God sent him, and *Bathshebah*, wise *Solomon* to succeed him in his Kingdom. He forgetteth all, and so you see our Saviour Christ forgetteth all their unkindness, he biddeth her not go tell my Renegate Disciples, that owned not me, they care not for me, I care not for them, I am above death, and all, and now will use them, as they did me; oh no, but *go tell my brethren*, without mentioning any thing that they have done unkindly.

Note.

What is the reason? it is sufficient to a gracious soul, that it is thus. It is the course of God, but there be reasons to give satisfaction.

Reason 1. First, the love of Christ to a poor disconsolate afflicted soul is most seasonable, when they have relapsed and dealt unkindly with Christ, then Christ not only forgiveth, but forgets all, nay and calleth them under the tearm of Brethren, which is more then forgiving and forgetting. Oh now it is seasonable; for there is a wonderful dejection of spirit after unkind usage of Christ, in a soul that knowes what Christ means. It is

Kindness shewed after dejection is very seasonable.

as

as a shower of rain after great drought, it falleth weighty upon the soul.

Secondly, The freedom of Christs love most appeareth then, when no desert of ours can move it; for is not that love free, when we have dealt unkindly with him, and joyned with the world, and with the flesh, and dealt slipperily with him, that then he will speak kindly to us, and make love to us. Lord, if I had had my due, what would have become of me? If he had sent them word according to their deserts, he might have said, go tell the Apostate base people that have dealt unworthily with me, whom I will send to Hell. Oh no, but tell my *Brethren*; his free love appeareth most at such times, when our souls are most dejected. Reason 2. Christ deals not with us after our deserts.

Thirdly, Satan roareth then most, then he most of all sheweth his horns, when we are relapsed, oh saith he, if thou hadst never found kindness it had been something; but thou hast dealt unworthily, that hast had so many favours, and dost thou so re- Reason 3.

quite the Lord of glory? Now this love of Christ doth exceedingly confound Satan, and trouble his plots: he knoweth then, that God leaveth men, and he joyneth with a guilty conscience, and a guilty conscience maketh them to fear all they have deserved: shall I look God in the face, & Christ in the face, when I have used them thus? shall I receive the Sacrament, and joyn with Gods people? now Satan doth joyn with guilt of conscience, and carrieth it further, and when God seeth them dejected and humbled for this, he speaketh more comfort to them then ever before.

Satan by laying guilt to our charge labors to carry us further from God.

There is none of us all, I can except none, but had need of this: have we dealt so unkindly with Christ since our conversion? have not we dealt proudly, and unkindly, and carlesly with him? and if we have the love of Christ in our brests, it will shame and abash us. Now if we have joyned with a temptation, Satan will say; will you go to God, and to prayer, that have served God thus? shall I yield to this temptation? if we can shame our selves, and say, Lord I take

all

all shame to my self, I have dealt most unworthily with thee; we shall hear a voice of comfort presently. And therefore what soever our condition be, be invited to repentance, though thou hast fallen, and fallen again, I have dealt unkindly; did not *Peter* so, and yet, *go tell my Disciples, and tell Peter.* The Pope will have him head of the Church, I am sure he was head in forsaking of Christ, and indeed Christ ever upbraided *Peter* with forsaking of him, now only he biddeth him feed, feed, feed, that he might take more notice of it; but he was so kind, that he never cast it into his teeth.

Comfort to those that shame themselves

John 21. 15, 16, 17.

Obj. But saith the poor drooping soul, if I had never tasted of mercy, it had been something.

Answ. But object not that; for though *Peters* offence was great, yet his offence was great; and though thy sins be great, yet if thy repentance and humiliation be answerable, thou shalt have most comfort of all. And therefore let no man be discouraged.

If we go on in sinful desperate.

courses, as the fashion of the world is, speak what we can, if we speak out our lungs, many will not leave an oath, nor their prophane base courses, and filthy wayes; ill they have been already, and ill they will be, till they come to Hell. Some such there be; but better, we are to speak to: whosoever thou art, that are weary of thy prophane base godless courses, be humbled for them. When thou art humbled, and broken-hearted, then think of Christ as he offers himself, think of nothing but love, nothing but mercy. Satan will picture him thus and thus; but when thou beest humbled and broken hearted, he is readier to entertain thee, then thou art to fly to him. And therefore at such times consider how Christ offereth himself to thee. He that dyed for his enemies, and seeks them that never sought him, that is found of them that sought him not, will he refuse them that seek him? If thou hast an heart humbled, and hast a desire of favour, will he refuse thee, that receiveth many in the world? therefore do not despair. We as Ambassadors be-

We are not so ready to come as Christ is to receive.

beseech you, saith the Apostle. Thou desirest Gods favour, and Christs love, thou desirest them, and Christ intreateth thee, and then thou art well met. Thou wouldst fain have pardon and mercy, so would Christ fain bestow it upon thee: therefore joine not to Satan, take heed of temptations in such a case as this is, take heed of refusing our own mercies; when God offers mercy in the bowels of his compassion, refuse it not. Christ is ready to shew great kindnesse in our greatest unkindnesse, if we be humbled for it.

Well met when Christ and the soul meet together.

But this belongeth to them that be broken hearted, that can prize and value Christ. They that go on in presumptuous courses shall find Christ in another manner of *Majesty*, they shall find him as a *Judge*, whom they despised as a *Brother*, and they that will not come in, and subject themselves to his mercy, they shall find his justice. If they will not come under this Scepter, they shall find his rod of Iron to crush them to pieces. And therefore let no corrupt careless person, that will go on, fortifie their pre-

Presumptuous sinners.

presumption from hence. It belongeth only to them that be humbled, and abased with the sight of sin, and consideration of their unkindness, and unworthy dealings with Christ. I know such are not subject to discouragement, and Satan is most ready to close with them, in strong temptations above all. Oh but let them never despair, but consider what the Apostle saith, *while sin aboundeth, grace aboundeth much more.* If there be height, depth, and breadth of sin in us, there is now more height, and depth, and breadth of mercy in Christ, yea more then we can receive.

The most humble Christian, most subject to be discouraged.

Rom. 5. 20.

Object. I have fallen from God, saith the soul: what if thou hast? but God is not fallen from thee. *Peter* denyed Christ; but did Christ deny *Peter*? no, Christ hath not denyed thee. What saith the Lord in *Jeremy*, *Will the Husband take the Wife when she hath been naught? no; yet return to me O Israel.* But say, thou hast been false, and committed such and such sins, whatsoever they be, though Adultery, yet return to me.

Answ.

Jer. 3. 1.

Comforts against great sins.

Oh

Quest. Oh but is it possible God should do it?

Resol. Yea, it is possible with him, *His thoughts are not as thy thoughts, his thoughts are as far above thine, as Heaven is above Earth.*

Our comforts fail not, because he is God and not man,

Obj. Why, no man will do it?

Answ. I, but here is the mercy of a God, I am God, and not man: therefore his comforts fail not. If he were so, he would not regard one that hath been so unkind; but he is God, and not man.

Go to my Brethren, I come now to the matter of the *Commission*, tell them, *I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God*, which is all included in *Brethren*; for if we be Gods in Christ, then God is our Father. But we must not deal in few words with disconsolate souls, but come again, and again with the same words. As how many times have you the comfort of the *Messiah* in *Isaiah*, and the rest of the Prophets, again, and again. Our hearts are so prone to doubt of Gods mercy, of Christs love, especially after guilt, that

Note.

all

all is little enough; and therefo
Difference between a carnal and a gratious heart.
our Saviour studieth to speak swee
to the heart. *Go tell my Brethren:* th
which a carnall heart, and curio
head, would count *Tautologie,* a
superfluity of words, a gracious hea
thinks to be scantness; oh more
that still, I have not enough. This
the pride of men, that will have a
things to satisfie a curious ear; but
gracious heart hath never enough
And therefore Christ addeth comfo
to comfort. *Go tell my Brethren, I a*
cend to my Father, and their Father,
my God, and their God. The Messa
it self is *Christs ascension.* The pla
whither, is to the *Father,* a comm
Father to him, and them; every wor
hath comfort.

I ascend.

I ascend to the Father, and to m
Father, and your Father too; now
have quitted my self of death and sin
Sin imputed to Christ as our surety.
imputed to me as a surety, & I am go
ing to Heaven to make an end of a
there. *I ascend to God, to my God, an*
to your God. We have all one com-
mon

mon Father, and one common God.

First, for his *ascension*, he did not yet ascend. Why then doth he speak for the present. *I ascend*, that is, I am shortly so to do. And it was in his mind, it was certainly so to be; and therefore he speaks of it in present. It is the phrase of faith, to speak of things to come, as if they were present, faith makes them so to the soul; for it looketh on the word, and all things, as they are in that word, who will make good whatsoever he saith. And therefore it is the evidence of things that are not yet, yet they be evident to a faithfull soul. If we could learn this aright to make things to come present, what kind of people should we be? could we think of our Resurrection and ascension, and glory to come, as present, they would be present to our faith: the things present, or sense, could not withdraw us. If we could set Hell before us, could the pleasures of Hell bewitch us? if the time to come were present, could any thing in the world withdraw us? it could

Faith makes things absent present.

not

not be. And therefore it is an excellent skill of faith to set things to come before us, as present.

Saints look forward as Christ did.

He *ascendeth*, he implyeth, that he was risen, that was past, and therefore he nameth it not. All Christ's mind was on ascending. Those that are risen together with Christ, their mind is all on ascension, all on Heaven. And this is one main reason because where any thing is imperfect there the spirit resteth not, till it attaineth to that perfection, that it is destinated unto. When any thing hath a proper element and place where it must rest, it resteth not till it be in its proper place and Element. The perfection of the soul is in Heaven to see Christ face to face, and God in Christ. Heaven is the Element of a Christian, it is his proper Region, he is never well till there, and there is his rest, his solace and contentment and there all his desires are satiated to the utmost. Till we be in Heaven, we be under desires; for we be under imperfections. All the while we are in imperfections, we are in an uncomfortable estate, and while we be so

Till we come to Heaven, our desires are unsatisfied.

we are not as we would be. And therefore whereſoever any are partakers of Chriſts Reſurrection, they mind the aſcenſion as preſent. Where any grace is, there the thoughts are for Heaven preſently.

Let us take a ſcantling of our diſpoſitions from hence. There be many that think it good to be here alwayes, they never think of aſcending. If they could live here alwayes, they would with all their heart; but it is not ſo with a Chriſtian, it is his deſire to be where his happineſs, his Saviour, his God, and Father is, where his Country and inheritance is; and therefore he mindeth aſcenſion, and things to come. When any thing is done, he thinks, that what is done, is not yet enough. As your great Conquerours in the world, they forget what they have conquered, and remember what they have yet to do. So Chriſt, having got conqueſt over death, he thinks now of aſcenſion, to conquer in the eyes of all; for it is not enough to conquer in the field, but he will conquer in the City, he will conquer

Simile.

to

to Heaven, and make shew of
Conquest. I ascend to lead captiv
captive, *to make a shew*, as it is
prest, *Colos.* 2. 15. While any th
is to do, or receive, our souls sho
not be satisfied, but still stretched
to desire further and further s
more and more still, till we be th
where our souls shall be fill'd to
uttermost, and there is no place
further desire, as Heaven is the pl
to satiate, and fill all the corner
the soul.

Quest. But how shall we kn
whether we be risen with Christ,
no?

Notes of our spiritual Resurrection.

Resol. Partly, we may know it
our former courses. Christ, when
was risen, all the Clothes were l
together in the grave, he left him
hind, and rose with an Earth-qua
there was a commotion, and after
Resurrection he minded Heaven.
if ye be risen with Christ, your fo
mer vile courses lie in the grave, yo
Oaths are gone, prophaness and wic
edness of life gone. Tell you me, y
are risen, while you carry the bon
of your sins about you? your pr
pha

ane, wretched, ſwearing, ungodly
rſons, filthy ſpeakers, that have an
art more filthy, vile in body and
nd, can they have any part in Chriſt?
here is that, that bound you before,
u carry it about ſtill: therefore
u be in the bonds of the Devill, you
in the grave of ſin, there is no ri-
g. Reſurrection is with commoti-
, there was an Earth-quake when
riſt aroſe, and there is an heart-
ake when the ſoul riſeth; can the
l riſe from ſin without commoti-
? In the inward man there will be
viſion between fleſh and ſpirit,
thout any adoe at all; and there-
e they that find nothing to do in
ir ſpirits, where is their riſing a-
in?

But that which is proper to the oc-
ion in hand, is the third, where
ce is begun, there will be an in-
rd proceeding and aſcending with
riſt. How ſhall I know therefore
ether I aſcend?

Firſt, by minding things above,
e Apoſtle telleth us directly, *Col.* 3.
Mind things above, be heavenly
inded in ſome ſort, live the life that

Chriſt

Christ did, after his Resurrection; his discourse was, after his Re rection of the Kingdom of Hea and his mind was on the place, w

Heavenly minded-nesse.

ther he was to go, and so a true C stian indeed, that is truly risen, thoughts and discourse is, (whe is himself) heavenly. Other thing useth as if he did not, as while w in the world, we must deal w worldly things; but we must with them, as that which is not proper Element, 1 *Cor.* 7. 37. *used the world as if they used it not; they married, as if they did not; they knew the fashion of this world passeth away.* And therefore they that fect earthly glory, carnal affecti and delights, they cannot think these things with any comfort. T be moles which grovel in the Ea Some make a profession, and they *cend higher as Kites do*; but t *look lowe:* they make high profe ons, but their aims are low. The *Eagles* that ascend to Christ, they ascend, so they look upw and upward still; they do not m things below, they do not take a hi

ch, and still continued arthly minded; but they look high, as well as end high: therefore let us not deve our selves.

. Yet more particularly, those t ascend with Christ, they that are Heaven, and they that are on earth the same things, though in diffe- degrees and measure. What do y in Heaven? there they meddle with defilements of the world, so though a Christian be on earth, defileth himself not with the rld, or ill Company. He will con- se with them, but not defile him- with them. They that be in Hea- , are praysing of God, and so be y much in prayfing of God re. They that be in Heaven, ve to see the face of God, they in it. And they that be heavenly- nded here, joy in the presence of od, in the world, the Sacraments his Children. If they be ascend- in any degree and measure, this y will do. And then they will joy communion with God, all they , as they do in Heaven: you have me carnal dispositions, that are ne- r themselves, but in carnal Com-

Converse with the world, be not defiled with the world.

pany

pany like themselves. If ever we
to be in Heaven, we must joy in
Heaven injoyed on earth. ven, on Earth, that is, in them th
heavenly in their dispositions.
cannot indure them here, how
we ever live with them in Heav

Quære. What was Christ to ascend for
is the end of his ascension?

The end of his ascension wa
Reasons of Christs ascension. take possession of Heaven in his b
which had never been there befor

1. And he was to take possessio
Heaven in his body, for his Ch
that is, his mystical body. So he
cended to Heaven, carried his ble
body (that he took in the Vir
womb with him.)

2. And likewise he ascended
Heaven, to take up Heaven in be
of his Spouse, his Church, as the h
band takes up Land in another Co
trey, in behalf of his Wife: there
he did ascend.

3. And likewise he ascended to l
us his spirit, that he might send
Comforter. He taketh away him
that was the great Comforter, wh
he was below. He was the Bri
groom, and while the Bride-groo

was present, they had not such a measure of the spirit, Christs presence supplyed all; but Christ ascended to Heaven, that his departure from them, might not be prejudicial to them; but that they might have comfort through the God of comfort, the spirit of comfort, the Holy Ghost. *I will send the Comforter.*

And though there was no losse by the ascension of Christ, they might fear by losing of Christ, that all their comfort was gone. I, but Christ tells them, *I go to prepare a place for you.* He goeth to take up Heaven for his Church, and then to send his spirit. What a blessed intercourse is here now, since Christs ascension, between Heaven and Earth? Our body is in heaven, and the spirit of God is here on earth. The flesh that he hath taken into heaven, is a pledge that all our flesh and bodies, shall be where he is ere long. In the mean time we have the spirit to comfort us, and never to leave us till we be brought to the place where Christ is. This is great comfort, and this is the main end why Christ ascended to the Father,

Father, that he might send the co forter. And comfort might w come now in more abundance, t before, because by the death of Ch all enemies were conquered, and the Resurrection of Christ, it was d covered, that God was appeased. T Resurrection of Christ manifested the world what was done by dea and now all enemies being conquer and God being appeased, what mains but the sweetest gift n Christ, the Holy Ghost. And that the reason why the holy Ghost w more abundant after Christs Resu rection, because God was fully-sa fied; and declared by the rising Christ, to be fully satisfied, and enemies to be conquered.

Our enemies conquered, and God appeased by Christs resurrection.

4. One end likewise of his Resu rection was, *to make a shew of his Co quest.* There is a double victory o the Enemy. There is a vict ry in the field, and triumph togeth with it. And then there is triumphi *in Civitate Regia*, a triumphing in t Kingly City. So Christ did conqu in his death, and shewed his Conqu by resurrection; but he did not le cap

Victory & triumph.

captivity captive, and make shew thereof till he ascended, and then he made open shew of his victorious triumph *in Civitate Regia.*

5. One special end likewise why he would have this Message sent, that he was to ascend, was that he might appear there in Heaven for us, as *Heb.* 9. *He appears for ever in Heaven for us, and maketh intercession for us.* When the high Priest was to enter into the holy of holies, (which was a type of Heaven) he carried the names of the twelve Tribes ingraven in stones upon his brest. Christ our true high Priest being entred into the true Holy of Holies, carried the names of all his Elect in his breast into Heaven, and there appeareth before God for us. He carrieth us in his heart. Christ doth fulfill that which in *John* 17. he prayeth for; appearing in heaven before his Father, by virtue of his blood-shed, and that blood that speaketh better things then the blood of *Abel*, it speaks mercy & pardon, the blood of *Abel* crieth for vengeance & justice; but the blood of Christ saith, here is one that I shed my blood for. Heb. 9. 24.

Christs blood speaks mercy and pardon.

And when we pray to God, God accepts of our prayers, and by virtue of Christs blood-shed, there is mercy and pardon, and favour procured which is sprinkled by faith upon the soul, God manifesting to the soul by his spirit, that Christ dyed in particular for such a soul; which soul praying to God in the name of Christ, that blood not only in Heaven, but sprinkled upon the soul speaketh peace there. The spirit saith that to the soul, which Christ doth in Heaven. Christ saith in Heaven, dyed for such a soul, the spirit saith in the soul, Christ dyed for me, and the blood of Christ is sprinkled on my very particular soul. As Christ in Heaven appears, and intercedeth for me, so the spirit intercedeth in mine own guilty heart, that always speaks discomfort, till it be satisfied with particular assurance. Christ dyed for me, and God is mine, and Christ mine. Thus particular faith sprinkleth the blood of Christ upon the soul. So that now my sins are not only pardoned in Heaven, but in my soul. There is not only intercessi-

The spirit here, and Christ in Heaven here together.

in Heaven, but in my ſoul. My ſoul goeth to God for pardon and for mercy, and rejoyceth in all the mercies it hath, and hopeth to have. What is done in Heaven, is done in a mans ſoul by the ſpirit in ſome meaſure.

His Reſurrection & aſcenſion declares the Father to be ſatisfied to the utmoſt.

6. The laſt end is, that he might ſhew that our ſalvation is exactly wrought, that God is perfectly ſatisfied to the full, elſe he ſhould never have riſen, much leſſe aſcended to Heaven. And therefore if we once believe in Chriſt, for forgiveneſs of ſins, and yet ſay, I doubt of ſalvation, it is all one, as if you ſhould go about to pluck Chriſt from Heaven. The doubtful diſtruſtful heart, till it be ſubdued by a ſpirit of faith, ſaith, who ſhall aſcend to Heaven, to tell me whether I ſhall go to Heaven? or who ſhall enter into the deep to tell me, I am freed from hell? I am afraid, I ſhall be damned, ſaith the guilty heart; till the ſpirit of God hath brought it under, and perſwaded it of Gods love in Chriſt. Say not, *who ſhall aſcend up to Heaven? for that is to bring Chriſt down from Hea-*

ven. And what an injurious thing is
Rom. 10, 6. 7. it to bring Christ from heaven, to suffer on the Crosse. This is a great indignity, though we think not of it, to doubt of our salvation, and not cast our selves on his mercy? For as verily as he is there, we shall be there. He is gone to take up a place for us; he is there in our name, as the Husband taketh a place for his spouse. And if we doubt whether we shall come there, or no, we doubt whether he be there, or no. And if we doubt of that, we doubt whether he hath wrought salvation, or no; and so we bring him down to the Crosse again. Who shall descend to the deep? that is, to bring Christ from the dead again: such is the danger of a distrustful heart. So that by Christs ascending into Heaven, we may know all is done and accomplished, and our enemies are subdued, God is appeased and fully satisfied, Heaven is taken up in our room, and therefore labor for a large heart answerable to the large unchangeable grounds we have, for faith to pitch and bottom it self upon.

There

Therefore make this further uſe of this aſcenſion of Chriſt, and thereupon his interceſſion in Heaven for us. He is there to plead our cauſe, he is there as our ſurety to appear for us; and not only ſo, but as a Councellor to plead for us; and not only ſo, but one of us, as if a Brother ſhould plead for a Brother; and not only ſo, but a favorite there too: all favorites are not ſo excellent at counſelling perhaps; but we have one that is favorite in Heaven, and is excellent at pleading, that can non-ſuit all accuſations laid againſt us by the Devil. He is the Son of God, and he is one of us; he appeareth not as a ſtranger; for a ſtranger, as the Councellor is perhaps for his Clyent, but he appears as our Brother. Let us think of the comforts of it. He appears for us to plead our Cauſe, with acceptation of his perſon and Cauſe. For he, before whom he pleadeth, God the Father ſent him to take our nature, die and aſcend into Heaven for us, to ſuſtain the perſons of particular offenders. He muſt needs hear Chriſt, that ſent him for that purpoſe. Where the

Chriſts interceſſion.

Apoc. 12. 9

Judge appoints a Councel, it is a sign he favoureth the cause. Perhaps we cannot pray, are disconsolate, and vexed with Satans temptations: the poor Clyent hath a good cause, but cannot make a good cause of it; but if he get a skilful Lawyer, that is favourable to him, and before a favourable Judge, his comfort is, his Advocate can make his Cause good. If we would confess our sins, as that we must do, we must take shame to ourselves in all our distress, and disconsolation of spirit, we must lay open our estates to God, and complain, and then desire God to look upon us, and Christ to plead our cause for us, and answer Satan; and when Satan is very malicious and subtle, as he is a very cunning enemy to alledge all advantages against us, to make us despair: remember this, we have one in heaven, that is more skilful then he, *that is the accuser of the Brethren.* That accuseth us to God, and to our own souls, that accuseth every man to himself, and maketh him an enemy to himself. But we have a pleader in heaven, that will take our part against the

Christ more skilful to save, then Satan is to destroy.

the Accuser of our Brethren, and quiet us at length in our Consciences. Perhaps we may be troubled a while to humble us; but remember that he is in Heaven purposely to plead our Cause.

It is a good plea to God, *Lord, I know not what to say, my sins are more then the hairs on mine head, Satan layeth hard to me, I cannot answer one of a thousand, I confess all my sins, hear me, and hear thy Sonne for my sake, he is now at thy right hand, and pleadeth for me.* And desire Christ to plead for us. We have not only all the Church to pray for us, Our Father, but we have Christ himself to plead for us, and make our cause good. If Christ saith, I shed my blood for this person, and appear now by virtue of my redemption; and the condition of the Covenant is, if we confess our sins, he is merciful to forgive, and if we sin, we have an Advocate in Heaven, to whom we must lay claim: the party hath confest the debt, and therefore the bond must be cancelled. He hath performed the conditions on his part, and therefore, make it good on thine

The super excellent advantage of Gods people, above the world.

1 Joh. 21.

own part. And being the spirit hath shamed thee for thy sins, what can the Devil say? What saith *Paul*? *It is God that justifieth, who shall condemn?*

Rom. 8. If God the party offended do justifie, who shall condemn? *It is Christ that dyed*, that is not enough, *that is risen again*, that is not enough, it is Christ that rose again, *and sitteth at the right hand of God for us*, and maketh intercession for us, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* let the Devil accuse what he will, Christ is risen, to shew that he hath satisfied, and is now in heaven, there appearing for us. Oh that we had hearts large enough, for these comforts, then should we never yield to base temptations.

It is against the pleasure of God that we should be disconsolate: therefore we wrong our own souls, and sin against our own comfort, when we let the rains loose by inordinate and extream sorrow. We lose that sweetness that we might injoy by giving way to discomfortable thoughts. Indeed if a man examine his life from the beginning of his conversion, to the

end

end thereof, he may thank himself for all his trouble. The sin against the holy Gospel is a kind of rebellion against God, though we think not so, when we will not be comforted, nor imbrace grounds of comfort, when we have them. The comforts of God ought not to be of small esteem to us, the sweet comforts, large, exceeding, eternal comforts of God, we ought to esteem of them as they be, and therefore our Saviour Christ sendeth to them speedily.

All Scripture is to this end, for consolation, even the Scripture that tendeth to instruction, and direction, that so men may be in a state of comfort; for Cordials are not good, but where there is purgation before. So all Scriptures that are purging, to tell us our faults, they be to bring us into a comfortable condition. Other Scriptures that tend to instruct our judgements, and settle us in faith what is the end of all, if we walk not comfortably towards God, and strongly in our places? Therefore when we look not to comfort, and joy in all conditions, we abuse the

All Scriptures are for consolation.

intendments of God.

But I beseech you make not a bad use of it; for if you know it to be so, if it worketh not graciously on you, and winneth you to respect God the more, and love him, that is thus indulgent and gratious; but go on in offending conscience, and break peace off, then at length conscience will admit of no comfort. Many that have had excellent comforts, have made havock of their consciences, and will go on in spight of Ministers, in spight of their consciences, and Gods spirit joyned with conscience, at length it is just with God to give them up to despair, wicked sinners that trample the blood of Christ under their feet. But for all other that strive against corruption, and would be better, it is a ground of marvellous comfort.

The slighting of the Ministry is the havock of conscience

I shall come to the Message it self, tell them, *I ascend.* He speaketh of that as present, which was surely to be. So we should think of our future Estate, as if we were presently to go to heaven. Faith hath this force, to make things to come, present. If we could keep

keep it in us, and exerciſe it, could we live in any ſin? but that it is diſtant, that is the cauſe of ſinning, we put off things in a diſtance, if it be at the day of judgement, that is far off, and therefore they will not leave their preſent pleaſure for that, that ſhall not be, they know not when. But look on things in the word of a God, that is *Jehovah*, that giveth a being to all, who hath ſpoken of things to come, as if preſent, and then you will be of another mind. Faith is the priviledge of a Chriſtian, which maketh things a far off preſent. No wicked man but would leave his ſwearing and prophaneſs, if he ſaw the joyes of Heaven, and pains of Hell; and it were no thanks to him; but to believe God on his word, that theſe things ſhall be, that is the commendations of a man, and the excellency of a Chriſtian above another man. Another man doth all by ſenſe; but the Chriſtian will truſt God on his word. *I aſcend* ſaith Chriſt.

Faith makes all preſent.

Fath the Chriſtians priviledge.

We muſt not think of the aſcenſion of Chriſt as a ſevered thing from us, but

Think on Christ as ascended with him,

but if we would have the comfort of it, we must think of it, as our selves ascending with him. Think of Christ as a publick person, and a surety for us, and then we shall have great comfort in that, that he saith, *I ascend*. God prepared paradise, before he made the Creature, he would have him to come into a place of honour and pleasure. And so God before ever we were born provided a place and paradise for us in Heaven, that we might end our dayes with greater comfort. We may be streightned here many a good Christian hath scarce where to lay his head; but Christ is gone to prepare a place for them in Heaven. And this may comfort us in the consideration of all our sins; for sin past, and for corruption present, and for any sin that we may commit for time to come; for any thing that is past, if we confesse our sins to God, he will forgive them: the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sins, even for the present corruptions that attend on us. We have one that stands between God and us as a surety, & he will give us his spirit to subdue our cor-

corruptions, and at length make us like himself, a glorious spouse. If we were perfect men, we needed not a Mediator, and this may teach us comfort, rather because we are sinners, and daily subject to offend God. We have one to make our peace; for time to come, if we sin, we have an Advocate. When Christ taught us to pray, forgive us our daily trespasses, he supposed we would daily run into sins. We have an Advocate in Heaven every day to stand between God and us, to answer God, to undertake that at length we should cease to offend him, and for the present, we are such as he shed his pretious blood for, and he appeareth for us by vertue of his death, which is a marvellous comfort. We think if we commit sin, there is no hope; but what needs a Mediator, but to make peace between the parties disagreeing? If all things were made up between God and us, what need of an intercessor? but God knoweth well enough, we run into daily sins, by reason of a spring of corruption in us, which is never idle. And therefore we may daily go to God in the

Ephes. 5. 20.

1 Joh. 2. 1. Mat. 6. 12.

Go to God for pardon of sinners in the name of Christ.

the name of our Advocate, and desire God for Christs sake to pardon, and desire Christ to intercede for us; let us therefore shame our selves.

There is not a Christian but will be in himself apprehensive of being thrown into Hell every day. There is a spring of corruption in him, and should God take a forfeiture of his daily rebellions, his conscience tells him, it were just. And therefore we must every day live upon this branch of his priestly office, his mediation. We must live by faith in this branch of Christ, and make use of it continually; for this will keep us from hell. And therefore if we sin every day, go to God, in the name of Christ, and desire him to pardon us. This is to feed on Christ, and therefore we should more willingly come to the Sacrament. When we be in heaven, we shall need a Mediator no longer; for we shall be perfectly holy. We cannot think of these things too much, they be the life of Religion, and of comforts, and it may teach us to make a true use of Christ in all our conditions. Poor souls

To rely on Christ is to feed upon him.

souls that are not acquainted with the Gospel, they think God will cast them into hell for every sin, and they live as if they had not an high Priest in Heaven to appear for them.

The matter of the message is, Christ ascendeth to God, as a common Father, and God to him and them. He doth not say, I ascend to the Father, that were no great comfort; for what were that to them? or to my Father only: neither doth he say, I ascend to our Father, for that is true in the order of it; for he is not in equal respect the God and Father of Christ, and the God and Father of us. And therefore he speaks of himself in the first place. *I go to my God and your God.* For he is first, and specially Christs *Father*, and Christs God, and then ours; as we shall see in the particulars. We have a common Father, and a common God, with Christ. God the Father is Christs Father, by eternal generatiō, as he is God and man: we have therefore the nature of Christ, as he is God and man.

God is first Christs God and Father, and then our God & Father.

How God is the Father of Christ.

There is this difference between Gods being Christs Father, and the Father of any else.

First

First of all, God is Christs Father from eternity, God had a being, and was a Father from all eternity. There is no man of equal standing with his Father, he is born after his Father cometh to be a man; but Christ is of God from all eternity, his generation is eternall, and therefore there is a grand difference.

Then Christ is coequal with the Father in glory and majesty every way. The Sun is not coequal with the Father, but Christ is with his Father.

Christ coequal with his Father.

Again, the Son in other Generations comes of the Father, and is like the Father, taken out of his substance but of a different substance from the Father; but Christ and the Father both the persons are in one substance, in one essence. The essence of the Father differeth not from the essence of the Son. We must remember this to give Christ the prerogative, and preheminency, that God is his Father in another manner then ours. He is his Father by nature, ours by adoption. What he is by nature, we are by grace: though Christ was intent upon

upon his ascension, yet he forgetteth not this grand differrnce here, but mentioneth it. *Go to my Brethren.* We must not call him brother again, we may think of him as our Brother; but *my God and my Lord*, as *Thomas* saith. Joh. 20.28 If the greatest person should call us Brother, yet it is most behoveful for the inferior to say, *my God, my Lord*, to acknowledge Christ as a great person, and to make use of his love to strengthen our faith, not to diminish our respect to him in any way. It is his infinite mercy to tearm us Brethren; but when we go to him, we must have other tearms.

Thus we see how to conceive of Christ after his Resurrection. When he hath triumphed over all his enemies, and reconciled God by his death, then *I go to my Father, and your Father.* Then he is a common Father by virtue of Christs satisfaction to divine wrath and justice, and victory and triumphing over all his enemies. So we must not conceive of God as our Father; but in reference to Christs victory over death. God is our Father by vertue of Christs satisfaction

to

to justice, and conquest over all our enemies. *The God of peace,* (saith the holy Apostle *Paul,* in the Epistle to the *Hebrews,* in the conclusion of that excellent Epistle,) *that brought you from death to life through our Lord Jesus Christ.* How cometh he to be the God of peace to us, which brought us from death to life, by our Lord Jesus? why? the Resurrection of Christ makes him the God of peace. Who raised him? He raised himself. But who together with himself? The Father raised him. And could the Father raise him, if he were not reconciled? But now he is the God of peace, for peace is made by the Crosse and blood of Christ, the great peace-maker of heaven and earth; now we may conceive of God under the sweet relation of a Father.

1 Col. 20.

Now this Relation of a Father teacheth us, as what we may expect from God, so what we ought to return to God again, and how we ought to carry our selves one towards another.

God a Father.

1. What we may expect from God being a Father? We may expect what-

soever

soever a Child may expect from a Father. God taketh not upon him empty names. He saith, he will be a Father, not only called a Father; *but I will be your Father*, and you shall be my Sonnes, 2 *Cor.* 6. *ult.* All the Fatherhood, and all the kindred in heaven and earth, that is spiritual: the comfort of it cometh from God the Father, reconciled to us in Christ. The word in the original is so strong, that we cannot express it in *English*. Fathers on earth are but poor Fathers, and they be but beams of the Fatherly affection that is in God. God will let us see by these beams of compassion, that is in a Father to a Child, what real compassion he beareth to us. The true reality of Fatherhood is in God. And therefore when we hear of the name of Father, think of whatsoever lieth in the bowels of a Father to a Child, and that we may expect from God our Father, and infinite more. It is a great indulgence; as a Father pitieth his Child, *Malac.* 3. so God will pitty us. Will a Father cast off his Child? Indeed he will cleanse the Child. So God will take

All comfort is from God reconciled to us in Christ.

Mal. 3. 17.

Father is a tearm of indulgence.

take away our abominations, a purge us when we defile our selv it is because of an eternal relation casteth us not off; we may expect fr him indulgence, and it is an ind gence of indulgence. God needed Sonne, when he made us Sonnes; he had his Sonne, and angels to pra himself withall. Can we pitty a pardon a Child, and will not G pardon and pitty us? why should conceive worse of him then of o selves? will we give pitty to a Fath and not pitty to the Father of bowels and compassion? and ther fore think not that God will cast off. God pardons us, and healeth o infirmities, and pittieth us, as a F ther pittieth his own Child, *Psal.* 10 It is a name under which no m must despair. What? despair und the name of a Father? despair mercy when we have a Father to to? The poor prodigal when he h spent his patrimony, his body, h good name, had lost all, and nothin left, yet he had a Father, and *I will* Luk. 15. 18 *to him.* And so when we be at the la cast, and have spent all, we have

Fa-

Father: therefore go to him. What saith the Church, *Isaiah* 63. 64. *Doubtlesse, thou art our Father:* when the Church was in a poor condition, *Though our righteousnesse be as a menstruous Cloth, and we be defiled, yet thou art our Father, we are the Clay, thou art the Potter, &c.* So that it is a name of indulgence.

You have his disposition set down by the Father of the prodigal. The Sonne saith, he will go to the Father, the Father runneth to him, and meeteth him, when he was coming, God runneth to us, and is ready to meet us, when we begin to repent of sin, and are sencible of our faults. He is more ready to pardon, then we to aske pardon.

Gods infinite love to a sinful man.

I touch only some principal things, that you may remember against the evil day and hour of temptation. He taketh not on him the relation of a Father for nought, but will fill it up to the uttermost. It is no empty Relation.

2. It is a name likewise of comfort. It is the speech of a natural man, a little punishment is enough from

from a Father, *he knoweth whereof we*
Heb. 12. 6. *are made, he remembers we are but dust*; he knoweth we are not Iron, nor flint, he knoweth our making, and therefore he will deal gently with us when he doth correct us, it is as necessary as our daily bread, to have gentle correction to wean us from the world; yet he doth it gently. *A little punishment will serve from a gracious Father.*

A name of provision. 3. It is a name likewise of provision, that we may expect from God that he will in all our exigencies, and necessities, provide for us whatsoever shall be needful. What saith our Saviour Christ to the poor Disciples doubting of want? *It is your Father*
Luk. 12. 32 *good will to give you the Kingdom*, what then? *fear not little flock*, he that will give you a Kingdom, will not he give you daily bread? *viaticum*, provision for a Journey. He that intendeth us Heaven, certainly he will provide for us here. And therefore in the Lords prayer, before all Petitions, as a ground of all, he putteth in our Father, and therefore, *give us our daily bread, our Father.* And therefore he

will give us grace to sanctifie his name, and do his will, and forgive us our sins. Expect all from our Father, which is the ground of all. Christ had much adoe to perswade his Disciples, that they should not want necessaries, and therefore he makes whole Sermons to strengthen their faith in this, *your heavenly Father knoweth what you stand in need of.* The Sonne cannot aske, but the Father can interpret any sigh, any groan, and knoweth what we would have. And therefore being Gods Children, we may fetch provision from him in all conditions. Luk 12.30

4. And with provisions, protection likewise, and therefore make this use of it; In the temptations of Satan, lie under the wings of our Father. We have a Father to go to, make use of him, make use of his protection, that God would shield us, that he would be a *Tower*, as he is a *Tower*, and *the righteous man may fly to him.* Lie under his wings, he is a gratious Father, and he hath taken this sweet relation on him for this purpose, that we may have comfort in all conditions. You Father is a name of protection Prc.18.20

see

ſee then what we may expect from God, by this ſweet relation he has taken on him in Chriſt, *to be our Father.*

What we owe to God as a Father.

2. This word, it is a word of Relation, it bindeth God to us, and us to God. We are to honour him as our Father. This one word is ſufficient to expreſſe our duty to a Father, and that is a word of reverence; for it includeth a mixt affection of fear and love. And it is an affection of an inferior to a ſuperior. He is great, therefore we ought to fear him. He is good, therefore we ought to love him. There is with him beams of Majeſty and bowels of compaſſion. As there is beams of Majeſty, we ought to fear him as bowels of compaſſion, we ought to love him, ſo that fear and love mixt together, is the affection we owe to God, as our Father. If we tremble, and are afraid to go to him we know not he is loving. If we go to him over boldly, and ſawcily, we forget that he is great: therefore we muſt think of his greatneſs, that we forget not his goodneſs. We muſt also think of his goodneſs, that we forget not

Fear God for his greatneſs, love him for his goodneſs.

not his greatneſs: therefore go boldly to him, with reverence to the Throne of Chriſt. In the word *Father*, there is more ſaving power then in ten thouſand, it toucheth his very bowels, when a Child wanteth any thing, and is in diſtreſs, let it but ſay, Father, or Mother, and the bowels of the Parents yearn upon him. If God be our Father, go to him boldly; but with reverence, go with affyance to his bowels. Oh it is a *perſwaſive word*. What cannot we look for from that Majeſty, that hath condeſcended to be called *Father*, and to be a *Father* to us in all our neceſſities? either we ſhall have what we want and lack, or elſe we ſhall have that which is better; he is a wiſe Father, he anſwereth not alwayes according to our wills, but alwayes according to our good. He ſeeth it is for our good, that we are not preſently cõforted. The Phyſitian giveth a ſharp potion. O I cannot indure, & the Chyrurgion lanceth, oh I cannot indure it; but the Chyrurgion knoweth it is not healing time: even ſo we would be preſently taken off from under croſſes; but God is a wiſe

Gods wiſdom and love.

Father, & knoweth how long it is fit for us to continue under the Crosse.

Come to him boldly therefore, under the name of a Father, that he may move his bowels, and surely will hear us. For as in *Psalm.* 27. when all forsook me, *my Father and Mother forsook me, but the Lord took me up:* Fathers in the flesh, and Mothers die; but the Lord taketh us up, he is an eternal Father, and therefore a ground of eternal boldnesse with God, and of everlasting comfort. He was our Father before we had a Father in the world; and he will be our Father, when we shall cease to be in the world. They be but Instruments under God, to bring us into the world. God is our true Father. Our other Fathers are but under God, to give us a being, to fit us for Heaven. He provideth the best inheritance and paternity for us in Heaven. And therefore never be disconsolate, but remember *I go to my Father, and your Father*; which is a word of eternal comfort. He was our Father from eternity in election, he will be our Father to eternity in glorification. *Can a Mother*

God keeps the best things till the last.

forget

forget her Child? yea though she should, yet can I not forget thee, thou art written in the palm of my hand. *God* hath us alwayes in his eye. A mother cannot alwayes think of her Child, she sleepeth sometimes; but *God* is a *Father*, that never sleepeth. *The Keeper of Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.* And this is our comfort in all times, and for eternity. And therefore we ought to carry our selves to *God* reverently, and go boldly to him, and alwayes make use of him. Esay 49. 15, 16. Psal. 121. 4.

And this we should learn likewise to maintain a sweet frame between *God* and us; shall *God* open such an advantage to us? shall *God* be our *Father*, and bear the gracious eternal affection of a Father? and shall not we by prayer and faith, fetch from our Father all we stand in need of? As our Saviour saith, *you that be earthly Fathers, when your Children ask such a thing, will you deny?* And have we a Father so rich, so loving, and shall not we have intercourse with him in all our daily necessities? What a Trade is open to us, if we know what Faith and prayer fetcheth all from God. Mat. 7. 9. 10.

a comfort is laid up in the sweet relation of a Father. *Your Father knoweth what we stand in need of*; and he will give thee the spring of all graces, not only a broken heart, a spirit of life, and vigor in his service; but go to God, and he will give thee his holy spirit, which is the best thing next Christ that can be. And therefore be incouraged to make intercourse between thee and God; considering we have a Brother in Heaven, our nature is there, and our spirit is below, we have the best things in Heaven, next Christ, on earth, and God hath our flesh in Heaven, by Christ; and therefore why should we not be much in prayer, and much in prayses in all our necessities. Beloved, it is a comfort of that largeness, that I cannot express it; I rather leave it to your admiration, that you may see what use to make of this sweet relation of *Father*.

Mat. 6.8.

God not a Father in Christ to the wicked

1. But we must know, that every one cannot say, *my Father*; for there are a company of men in the world, that may say in some respects, *our Father*; but in other respects they cannot. As

our

our Saviour Chriſt ſaith peremptorily, *John* 8. 44. *You be of your Father the Devil.* They bragged of God their *Father*, and they were of their *Father* the *Devil.* Therefore conſider who is fit to take this name into their mouths. *My Father*, mark the diſpoſition of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and then you ſhall ſee who be fit to bragg of God as their *Father.* They be very formal men, look to their outward devotion, who ſo devout as they? They ſtudied it; but what were they for the inſide? they were malitious men, they were ſatanical men, men oppoſite to the power of Religion, arrant Hypocrites, painted Sepulchres. It is no matter for Complement, or formality, an Hypocrite may have much of that in the eys of the world, yet may be a Child of the *Devil* for all that, and a *Phariſee* for all that. Thou maiſt be malitious againſt the truth, as the *Phariſees* ſought Chriſts blood. A man may be like *Herod*, ſeeking the blood of Chriſt in his Members, perſecuting Chriſt, as all cruel men do. They ſeek to devour Chriſt in his profeſſors, what they

The Hypocrite diſpoſition.

can, they disparage and dishearten them, they are enemies to the power of Religion, and to the Ordinances of God; they be the Children of the Devil, and therefore have no reason at all to bragg, that God is their *Father*. Indeed an inward bitter disposition against the power of Religion, though under any formality, is a Character of a satanical spirit, & such cannot say, *Our Father*; If they do, it is an usurpation; for their true *Father* is the *Devil*. 2. Who then can say *our Father?* those that by the spirit of the Father, and the Son, by the Holy Ghost, are ingraffed into Christ, by a spirit of adoption, and have the stamp of the Father upon them. The likeness of the Father, and of Christ, whom God begets to his own likeness, that are (in a word) like Christ. Christ is the first Son, and in him, and for his sake, we are Sons. He is the natural Son, and they may say *our Father*, that labor to express the disposition of Christ, who is the first Son. See this disposition of Christ in the Gospel, how marvellously patient he was under the hand of his Father, obedient

To whom God is a Father.

Christs disposition

to

to the death of his Crosse, humbled, full of love, full of goodness. He went about doing good. Do we then walk as Christ did? carry we the image of the second *Adam?* have we the patient, humble, meek disposition of Christ in our measure? do we love Christ in his members, God in his Image? do we love the Ordinances, and the power of Religion? this sheweth what we are, and is our conversation sutable to our inward disposition? do we walk in light? do we shew by our conversation, whose Children we are? do our speeches give a Character of the inward man. If this be in us, though in never so small a measure, with comfort we may say, *our Father.*

The Character of a gratious Christian.

But may not another man, that is not in Christ, come to God under the sweet name of *our Father?* yea, he may come to him as his Father by creation and providence, or sacramentally a Father, or as brought into the Church, and having God to create him, and to provide for him. Lord thou hast shewed thy self a gracious Father thus far, though I cannot from any inward perswasion say,

Quære. Solution.

My Father. Thus far as I can, I say *my Father*, strive against our spiritual infidelity, believe God, and cast our selves on his gracious promises in Christ, God will meet us at the same time, and he will send us his spirit, to make us his Sons. And therefore let no man that hath been a wicked liver, be discouraged from going to God in the name of a *Father*, in that wherein he is a *Father*. Lord thou hast created me, and preserved me, and it is thy mercy, I am not in Hell: yet thou offer'st to be my Father in Christ, thou hast made gracious promises, and invited me; and upon this, when the heart yieldeth to the gracious apprehensions of God as a Father, there is a spirit of faith wrought in the heart presently: therefore think of the name of a *Father*, and the very thoughts of it will bring the spirit of adoption.

No sin should hinder us from going to God as our Father.

The name of Father speaks no comfort to the malitious enemies of Christ.

Only it speaks no comfort to the bitter malicious satanical enemies of Christ, and the power of Religion, they be Children of the Devil. But now poor souls that groan under the burden of sin, let them think that God

God is a Father, and of the mercies of God, though they do not see they be interested in them. By the very contemplation of the mercies of God in Christ, and his inviting them, to receive them, the spirit of God will be wrought in the soul, whereby they may have confidence to come to *God* as a Father.

I desire you therefore to remember this, it is the first Sermon of our Saviour Christ, after his Resurrection, and therefore forget not to think of *God* as a Father, and Christ as a Brother. Indeed whatsoever comfort is in any relation, *God* and *Christ* have taken it on them. A Father is more comprehensive then any other Title, *Christ* is *Father*, and *Husband*, and *Spouse*. And *God* is our *Rock* and *Shield*, and whatsoever is comfortable, he hath taken on him; and in Christ we may command him to be so. And if we had ten thousand Worlds, they could not be compared to the comforts that arise from hence, that we can call *God* Father. It is more to us, if we could improve it in our spiritual Trade for Heaven, then

if we had a thousand worlds, especially in dayes of affliction, and in the hour of death. For it improveth whatsoever is in the bowels of God for poor distressed souls. When nothing else will comfort, this will comfort, if we can say to *God*, Father. Though we cannot make a distinct prayer, yet if we can say, Father, *God* can pick matter out of our broken Language. Now Christ is ascended up to Heaven, he doth us more good then he did, when he was upon the earth. The Sun in the Firmament yieldeth us heat and comfort; but if it were nearer, it would do us hurt, or if further off, it would not do us so much good. God hath placed it (being a common light of the world) high, to inlighten inferior bodies, and to convey influence by means into them. And so Christ the Son of righteousness being ascended, and advanced to Heaven, doth more good then on earth. And therefore saith he, *it is for your good that I ascend.* It is for our good that we have Christ in Heaven to appear there for us.

Simile.

I ascend to my Father, and to your Father. *Father* is here taken personally, not essentially, though it be true in that sense, *to my Father*, as the first person of the Trinity especially. Christ might well say, *I ascend to my Father* now; for he was risen again, and was mightily declared to be the Son of God, by his Resurrection from the dead. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, that is, this day have I *declared* thee. It is said of things, *fiunt, cum pate fiunt*, they are done, when they be open, and declared to be done. Christ was the Son of God when he rose again, because he was discovered by his glorious Resurrection to be so indeed. And therefore Christ may well say after his Resurrection, *I go to my Father, and your Father.* Observe from hence, That *God in Christ is our Father.* We say, Relations are *Minimæ entitatis*, they are little entities founded on others; but they are, *maximæ consequentiæ*, of great concernment. Rom. 1. 4. Heb. 1. 5.

I beseech you, before I leave the point, give me leave to go on a little further in this, to shew that wonderful

ful mercy that admirable goodness, which the tongues and hearts of all the men in the world, and Angels in Heaven are not able to express, that love of God which is contained in the Relation he hath taken on him in Christ to be *our Father*.

God's unexpressible and wonderful love to mankind.

1. Consider who, and whom. Who, the great God, that hath the Son to solace himself in; he did not adopt us, because he wanted Sons, he had Sons of his own, and Sons of his love to sollace himself in, what need he have took Traitors, Rebels, enemies, to make them his Sons? Oh it is a marvellous advancement of our nature, that God should in Christ become our *Father*. It is said, *Psalm* Psal. 113. 6. 113. *God abaseth himself to behold things below*; and indeed so he doth, (with reverence be it spoken to his great Majesty,) he abaseth himself in regard of things below. In regard of us worms of the earth, that be enemies, yea Devils by nature. For many ye shall see the Devil in them, in their lying, and opposing of goodness. And God will alwayes have some amongst men, to shew others what they

they would be, if God left them to themſelves. *God* abaſeth himſelf to behold things below. Not, that it is a diminution of Majeſty to do it; but *God* in Chriſt hath ſtooped ſo low, that he could go no lower, and he is advanced as high in our nature as can be. How could *God* become a man, a curſe, *God* in the ſecond perſon with us, *God* in the firſt perſon to be ſo near to us, as a *Father*, and *God* in the ſecond perſon to make him a *Father*, to be ſo low as Chriſt was, which is to be as low as hell it ſelf.

Our nature advanced in Chriſt, as high as can be.

2. Conſider to whom this meſſage is ſent. He is your Father, even a Father to you the Diſciples, now you are diſconſolate. *God* owneth us for his Children at the worſt. He took our condition notwithſtanding all our infirmities. When we be proneſt by a work of the ſpirit to condemn our ſelves, then *God* is neareſt to juſtifie us. When the poor prodigal ſaid, I am unworthy to be a Son, make me an Houſhold Servant, you ſee how the Father entertaineth him. So the poor Publican dareth not lift up his eyes, and yet went away juſtified. *David*, when

God a Father to his diſconſolate Diſciples.

when he could not pray, but murmur
Psal. 116. 11. and rebell, and said in his heart, all men are lyars, *yet thou heardst the voice of my prayer*; even then, when he could not pray, but groan, and sigh to God, *I said, I am cast out of thy sight, yet thou regardest the voice of my prayer.* When he said, out of a murmuring spirit, and rebelliousness of nature, I am cast out of thy sight. A Speech that tended to desperation, yet God heard the voice of his prayer. When
Job 42.6.8 *Job* said, *I clothed my self in dust and ashes*; *God said to him, I have accepted thee.* When we by the spirit think our selves unworthy to be *accepted*, or to look to Heaven, or to tread upon the Earth, then *God* looketh on us, worthy in his Son; and never more worthy, then when we acknowledg our own unworthiness. *Go tell my Disciples* at this time, when they had dealt so unworthily, *I go to their Father.*

Gods love to us is from his own bowels, not from our goodness.

It is from his own bowels, and not any goodness in us, that he loveth us. He loveth the work of his own spirit, his own nature, that that is of his own. Though the Child hath many in-

infirmities, yet the Father seeth the nature of the Child, and therefore loveth it. God seeth his Image of holiness in us, in some poor measure, and he loveth his own in us. And he loveth our love to him, which is in some measure. Though the Disciples had got into corners, after their unkind dealing with Christ, yet he knew they loved him. As where there is love, there will be a reflection of his love back again.

And then *God* knoweth, if he should not shew mercy to sinners, he should have none to serve him on earth. And therefore saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 130. v. 4. *There is mercy with thee, that thou maist be feared*; that is, *worshipped*. If *God* were not merciful to sinners, where should he have any to worship him? And therefore *God* sheweth himself to be a Father, even to sinful Creatures, even in their wickedness, he seeth his own nature in them. He seeth some love, some work of respect in them, and if he should not love them, he would have none to fear him.

If mercy were not shewed to sinners, none could be saved.

Beloved, live upon this. I spake be-

before of the love of Christ. Here is the love of *God* the Father, who is content to be a Father, even in our sinful condition. If *God* be a Father to us, as to Christ, then let not our hearts be discouraged in afflictions, persecutions, temptations. *God* was a Father to Christ in his desertion. *God* leaveth us to our selves sometimes, and we fear his love. Did not he leave his own Son upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* & yet he ceased not to be a Father.

Comfort in afflictions.

Mat. 27. 46

For persecution of enemies, was not Christs whole life fill'd up with persecution, and yet a Son? For temptations, thou art tempted, and thinkest thou art none of *Gods* Children? Satan did tempt our blessed Saviour, that he might be a merciful Saviour, and know how to succour thee in times of temptation: therefore be not discouraged, say not, when thou art deserted, persecuted, afflicted, tempted, *God* is not thy Father; for by that reason, thou maist argue, *God* was none of Christs Father, *God* was Christs Father, notwithstanding his desertion for a time, and not-

God Christs Father in all his persecutions.

notwithstanding his afflictions in the world, his persecutions of all sorts of men, and notwithstanding his temptations, *God* was his Father still. This we must observe, *Father* is not a relation to day, and none to morrow. It is an eternal relation. *Dum percutis pater es, Dum Castigas, pater es*, saith *Augustine*, while thou strikest us, thou art our Father, whilst thou correctest us, thou art our Father. Parents are tender to their weakest and sick Children, and *God* is most tender of all to them that be weak. *Go tell Peter*, And therefore never be out of conceipt of *God*, or Christ, we cannot be in a condition wherein, on any sound grounds, we may run from *God*.

But if this be so, let us learn of *God* to be indulgent. If it were to speak to Ministers, I should be large to advise them to preach the Law and the Gospel. The very Law is preached in mercy. The Lord taketh a severe course; but it is to order us. All *Gods* severity is reducible to mercy, and Christ: all his afflictions, humiliations, and abasements, do they come from unfatherly affection? no; but to

The Law necessary to be teached.

to draw us home to him. And the
fore never be terrible to any; but w
a bowel of compassion, but with
mind that they may see themsel
and see the comforts they have
Christ. We ought to be of his affe
on, the great *Pastor* and *Bishop* (of
Church. And so for ordinary Ch
stians, they should be indulgent
to another. Some are always cutti
in Ulcers, always wounding and te
ing themselves with ill usage,
misconstruction, keeping themse
from growing up in a better life,
observing the infirmities of them t
be better then themselves. Oh, *but
tell my Brethren,* that my Father o
eth them for his Children, which m
be a use of marvellous comfort to

Shall a Child be always prowl
for it self? we think there is neit
Father nor Mother, to take care for
your heavenly Father knoweth wh
you need. We ought to labor for co
tentment in all conditions; for *God*
our Father. And for others, if *God*
our Father, let us look to others, th
be our brethren, own them, and c
ry our selves to them as brethren. L
the strong carythēselves lowly to th

Contentation in all conditions to be laboured for.

ak, it is a sign of greatest strength
be most indulgent. Many account it
at commendations on their part to
censorious, and to be severe; but
it is the greatest part of their weak-
s, if they have any goodness in
m. For who was more indulgent
the Disciples then Christ, who
their weakness? He bore
h all their infirmities. Where we
any goodness, let us bear with
ny weaknesses, we ought to be
ceable men, *Beati sunt pacifici*,
y that be appeased in their consci-
es, in sense of their own pardon,
ready to shew mercy to others.
ie contentions, quarrelsom dispo-
ons, argue, they never found com-
t from God himself.

If God be a Father, and we are
thren, it is a levelling word, it
ngeth Mountains down, and filleth
vallies. All are Brethren, take them
what condition you will, if they
great in the world, Brethren of an
n degree, yet brother levelleth thē.
they be of low degree, yet it filleth
em up, & raiseth thē to the height in
is brotherhood. And therefore go tel

Humility a lesson to be learned from Brotherhood.

my

my Brethren, tell them all; for the
all equally Brethren.

If I were to speak to persons of
lity, and great parts, as I am to
to mean, let them be put in mi
their condition. Nothing
raise us up so high, as to forget
verlasting relation of Brother.
mity should not so far prevail
us, as to forget that which the
dren of God have to eternity.
for other persons more eminent,
be a King, let him not so mind
as to forget all other. For all
ons determine in death, and must
laid in the dust: all must stand
equal ground before Gods Barre,
they that have most to answer
have the highest accompt of all:
therefore it is ground of humility
all. Let them that are in greatest
nency consider this; *Paul* after
2 Cor. 5. 16. version, could say, *henceforth know no man after the flesh.* There is a
deal of humanity in the World, co
plement is very ordinary, which
the Picture and out-side of humani
but Christian love, which is, a deg
above humanity: the Apostle call

φιλαδελφία brotherly love, that is the
m of the world. They will own a
ther in office; but owning them
he sweet bonds of Brotherhood, as
y are the Sons of God, here is
ven, make much of them in that
d, that is a strange thing in the
ld; but we must know what it
neth, before we come to Heaven,
must respect a Christian, be he
at he will be, under all his infirmi-
, if he hath a good spirit in him,
ich God the Father seeth, and
rist seeth. We must bear love to
Saints. Some will make much of
eminent man, that hath excellent
ts, because there may be some
ntenance from such persons; but
e is sincerity that beareth love to
Saints. He wraps them up all in
general tearm, *Go tell Peter*, a-
ngst the rest, that hath offended,
ore then the rest.

Love to the Saints the highest mark of sincerity.

If you will know whether you be
ue Brethren or no, or Sons of God,
r no; make a use of tryal, by what
formerly delivered. I shall inlarge
y self in that point, because all de-
endeth upon it. God is the Father

of

of all by creation; he is the Fath
a general Covenant, of all that r
the Sacrament, and are baptized.
if they have no other relation to
but so, they may go to Hell, as J
and others did: therefore we
know whether we may claim th
lation of Father, on good groun
no, else it is an usurpation.

Notes of adoption.

1. Those that belong to God,
spirit of God witnesseth to them
they are Sons. They that are ad
ed, have the spirit of adoption in
degree, God sendeth his spirit
their hearts, that assures them,
they be Gods Children. And h
soever this is the first, yet God gi
some intimation by his spirit,
they look to God in another fami
manner then before, and he look
them in a Fatherly manner, so ther
some intimations, and insinuati
and hints, though the spirit of ad
tion witnesseth not fully, and gl
ously to the soul always, becaus
are not fitted for it; but someti
in great afflictions, and desertio
Where the spirit of God is, there
Communion with God in the spi

adoption. And when the voice of
spirit of adoption speaks not
dly, yet there is a work of the
irit: there is something in us re-
ved by the spirit, there is some-
ing of the new Creature. When a
hristian cannot hear God say to his
ul, I am thy salvation, yet a man
y see a work of grace: there is a
ve to God, to the Ordinances, to the
ople of God, a mourning because
cannot mourn, a sighing, because
hath not an heart pliable. He is
scordant with his condition, when
is disconsolate, so that there is a
work of the spirit helpeth him in his
orst condition.

God may be our God, though we cannot alwayes make it

Besides, there is a spirit of suppli-
tion in some measure, though he
nnot make set discourses to God,
he can in a sweet manner lay o.
n his sorrow and grief to God, and
ve them in his bosom. They be
roken words perhaps; but God can
ick sense out of them. God know-
th the meaning of the sighing of his
wn spirit, though broken speeches.
o that where there is any tongue for
God in a man, there is a spirit of
prayer,

prayer, there is not a strangeness to God to go altogether by; but the spirit hath a kind of acquaintance with God, and it goeth to God in familiarity, and layeth forth grief and putteth forth Petitions, in another manner then the Word doth.

Again, a Christian in the worst condition; God not only shineth to him through the Cloud, but there is a spirit in him that sigheth, to get through all thick Clouds to God. There is a spirit of supplication, and of love in some degree, for that is promised. *The spirit shall help our infirmities, when we know not how to pray.* And the intercourse and Communion with *God* is never broken off, when there is any spirit of adoption. Therefore *Jonas* and *David*, and the rest though they could not pray, yet they sighed to *God*, and would not leave him. If they could not imbrace Christ, they would touch the hem of his garment. They will not yield to the stream altogether, but strive against it. And though they be carried away with the strength of the stream,

Even sighs & groans pierce through thick Clouds to get to God.

stream, and see no goodness in themselves, yet they that be with them, shall see a spirit striving to another condition, then they are in. Something of Christs, something of Gods spirit there will be in them. And take them at the worst, they will appear better then the civil man, that thinks himself a glorious man, though he hath nothing, but for shew and fashion, who would be in such a mans condition, without some brokenness of heart, some sighs?

2. Likewise we may know it by our sympathy and Antipathy. Our sympathy with them that be good, and antipathy to that which is naught. There is a love of that which is good. So things, good things are connatural to a good man. There is a relish in good Company, and good things. As there is sweetness in the best things, so there is something in the Children of God, that is answerable to the God whom they serve. He is never so out of taste, but he findeth his chief comfort in this thing; and he is never himself so much, as when he is conversant in these things,

Good things connatural to good men.

though in different measure, sometimes more, and sometimes less. There is an inward antipathy to God in a proud carnal man, that hath not his heart subdued by grace, there is a contrariety to the power of that grace, which outwardly he professeth, and a sympathy with the world, and the spirit of the world. Take a good Christian at the worst, he is better then another at the best. I beseech you therefore, examine our dispositions, how we stand affected to things of an higher nature, then the things of the world, to spiritual things, how we can relish spiritual things, God's Ordinances, & any thing that is holy; surely, if there be the life of God, and Christ in us, there will be a kind of cõnaturalness, & suitableness of taste to the sweetnes that is in holy things.

To come to the next, mark the order here, *Go to my Father, and your Father.* We are the Sons of God at the second hand. God is the Father of Christ first, and then ours. He is his God first, then our God.

This is a weighty point for directing of our devotion, that we may know

know in what order to look on God. See God in Christ, see all things in Christ first, and then in us. Look upon him as Father to Christ, and then to us. Look on him as a God to Christ first, and in Christ, a God to us. Look on him, as having elected us; but elect in Christ first. See our selves justified; but see Christ justified first from our sins, and his justification declared by his resurrection. See our resurrection and ascension, and glorification in Heaven, not directly; but in Christ our head, who is in Heaven, and taketh up place for us. See God loving us; but look on it in Christ, who is *Sedes amoris*. The next thing to God, is his Son, and he loveth none, but in him. When we consider of any spiritual blessing, say with the Apostle, *Blessed be God who hath filled us with all spiritual blessings in Christ*. Otherwise we do not know our selves, nor God. Whatsoever is derived from God to us, is through Christ: all promises are his first, they are made to him, and to our nature in him, and they are performed for his sake; he taketh them from God

How to go to God in prayer.

Ephes. 1. 3.

the Father, and they be performed for his sake. He is the true *Aaron*, we are but the skirts, the Oyl that is powered upon his head, runneth down to his skirts, it runneth to the meanest Christian; but the Oyntment of grace is first powred on his head. Of
1 John. 17 *his grace we receive grace for grace, and of his fulness.* The first fulness is God himself, the second receptacle of all, is Christ, God-man, the third are we; we have it at the third hand. God emptieth himself into Christ, a Mediator. In him are the fulnesse of all riches, the treasures of all wisdom and knowledg, we are compleated in him, and in him we are full. His is not only a fulness of the Vessel as ours is; but a fulness of the Fountain.

And it is for our comfort that it is so, that Gods love is to Christ first. There is a firm foundation, when God loveth us in his Son, and we are Children in his natural Son, in whom we are adopted, then our state is firm. Our first state in the first *Adam* was not firm; but now our nature is taken into the unity of the second person, it is firm. So that the love and

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care, and Fatherly diſpoſition of God towards us, it is ſweet to us, becauſe it is tender to his Son. It is eternal to us, becauſe it is eternal to him. He can as ſoon ceaſe to love his Son, as ceaſe to love us. For with the ſame love he loveth all Chriſt myſtical, head and members. There is not the leaſt finger of Chriſt, the leaſt deſpiſed member of Chriſt; but God looketh on him with that ſweet eternal tenderneſs, with which he looketh upon his Son, preſerving the prerogative of the head. Oh this is a ſweet comfort, that now all the excellent priviledges of a Chriſtian are ſet on Chriſt, and then on us: and therefore we ſhould not loſe them; for Chriſt will loſe nothing. When the favour of a Prince is founded on his Son, whom he always loveth, the affection is unalterable on the Son; and therefore the caſe is good. So Gods favour to us is founded on his love to his Son, & therefore unalterable, and eternal: we ſhould therefore look up to God in his ſon, put up all our Petitiõs to him in his ſon, expect all from him in his ſonne. He is in Heaven for us,

Mans infinite happineſs by Chriſt.

to do that that belongeth to us. Expect all from God through Christ, and do all to God through Christ, love God in Christ, and Christ in God, our selves in Christ, and our selves in the love of God. Christ is in God, and God is in Christ. God and Christ are in us, there is a marvellous sweet relation, and communion between God and us, and Christ and us. It is a sweet communion, and mysterious to us. How sweet is the communion between the soul and the body, the soule being so spiritual, and the body a peece of earth. But what is this to the mystery of mysteries, when God takes clay and dust into unity of his person, and all this is for this union. The great and glorious union of Christ to our natures, is, that he may take us into his mystical body, and so make us one with himself, and one with the Father. He took our natures, that he might convey his Fatherly goodness and love, and spirit to us. The sweet union of the two natures of Christ, is to confirm union between the Father and us, and Christ and us. And we

Clay and dust taken into unity of the person of God.

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are never happy till we be assured, that we are one with Christ, which is the issue of his excellent prayer. *John* 17.

Our blessed Saviour fetcheth the comfort of our *Father* from this, that God is his Father first, and so to joyn both together, That God is our God, because he is his God first. It is a point very considerable; That whatsoever comfort we look for from God, and in God, we must see it in Christ first, before we see it in our selves; because we be but Sons by adoption, and we have all we have from God through Christ. Whatsoever we see in Christ, think this will belong to us. And whatsoever we look should belong to us, see it first in him. As verily as he ascended, we shall ascend, As verily as he rose, we shall arise. As verily as he is at Gods right hand, we shall be there too; for by faith we sit now in heavenly places with Christ, and *we shall judge the world, and be for ever with the Lord.* Whatsoever we see in Christ, interest our selves in it. And therefore we must not conceive of Christ, as a severed Ephes. 2 6.

person; but conceive of our selves in union, and communion with Christ our head, and to conceive of Christ as our head and surety, and second *Adam.* And as a quickening spirit, that communicateth all to us. And therefore when we are to deal with God, be sure to go through Christ, as we expect all from God through Christ, so give all to God through Christ again. Be sure to take *Benjamin* with us when we go, & come cloathed with the Garments of our elder Brother, and do not doubt when we come with Christ; for else we dishonour Christ: shall I come in the sweet name and mediation of my Saviour, that hath perfected salvation, and not be accepted of God, when God hath ordained him for that purpose? If we stagger, and doubt to receive any thing at Gods hands, we wrong not only Gods bounty, but Christ the Mediator; carry this therefore all along with us, do all in him, and desire God to pardon all for his sake, and God will regard us.

All we have, or can expect to have, must be obtained through Christ.

Use. Let us therefore make this use of it, and add this further, That if so be God

God is firſt the Father of Chriſt, before he is our Father, and firſt the God of Chriſt before he is our God, and that all our good is dependent upon what God is to Chriſt firſt; then doth not this follow from hence, that we ſhould not only thank God for our ſelves; but thank God for whatſoever he hath done to Chriſt; not only comfort our ſelves in it, but let God have the glory of it. And this the ſpirit of God in the holy Apoſtles *Peter* and *Paul* led them to. *Epheſ.* 1. *Bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; what? and nothing but ſo? nay, with a reduplication, *Bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, even becauſe he is the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe out of his infinite depth of wiſdom and goodneſs, he hath found out a way to ſave us in Chriſt, to be a Father to him, and in him a Father to us. It is ſaid of the Virgin Mary, *All Generations ſhall call her bleſſed.* Why? becauſe ſhe was Mother of the perſon that was God: ſhe was the Mother of Chriſt in humane nature, and of God, becauſe we may not ſever the perſons. And ſhall we bleſſe the Virgin

Bleſſe God for Chriſt as well as for our ſelves.

Luk. 1.48.

gin *Mary*, as Mother of God, and not God as Father of Christ? If she be the Mother of Christ-man, then God is the Father of whole Christ, and therefore blessed be God, not only that he is our Father, and our God; but that he might be thus with satisfaction to divine justice, he hath found out such a way to be the Father of Christ, and Christ, as man, is an object of Gods love, and predestination as well as we. We deserved nothing at Gods hands; but he found out such a way by taking the nature of man into unity of his second person, and so became a Father of Christ, and of us. And therefore blesse God, who hath predestinated Christ to be the Lamb of God, that hath freed him from sin, and raised him from the dead, that hath carried him into Heaven, and set him at his right hand, & ordained him to be judg of quick and dead. Are these things severed from us? no, they be favours that be ours in Christ, his first, then ours. And therefore whensoever we think of any thing Christ hath of his glory in Heaven, as he is King of Hea-

Christ as man the object of Gods love and predestination as well as we.

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ven and earth, and hath all power committed to him, gloriſie God for it, and think of it, this is mine; he is mine Husband, my head, he hath taken up that glory, and whatſoever is in Heaven, and injoyeth them, he hath taken it up for me; and therefore we ſhould bleſſe God for it. So the Apoſtle *Peter, bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt that hath begot us again to an inheritance immortal, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reſerved in the Heavens.* He hath begot us to a lively hope, *through the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead.* So it is from the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead, that Chriſt ſaith, God is my Father, and your Father: ſince Gods juſtice is ſatisfied by my Reſurrection, that is, declared to be ſatisfied, *I aſcend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.* I beſeech you let us not loſe the comfort of theſe things, ſince our Saviour Chriſt intendeth them for comfort. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

To come to the words. Firſt Chriſt ſaith, God was his God, and our God, becauſe his God. In what ſenſe is God Chriſts God? As mediator, How God is Chriſts God.

tor as man, both in regard of his person, and in regard of his office, God is Christs God every way. See *Psal.* 22. which is a Psalm of Christ, *David* being but a type of him in it, Thou art my God from my mothers womb, and so God is Christs God in his particular person from his Mothers womb. For first, God was Christs God, when by his holy spirit he sanctified him in his Mothers womb, and brought him out into the world. Let the tooliſh disputes of Fryars, and dreams, and dotages of dunsical times go. But thou art my God from my Mothers womb.

And 2. He is Christs God, because he saved him from the massacre of the Infants. Our Saviour Christ makes that prayer in *Psal.* 22. on the Crosse, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

3. God was Christs God in protecting of him in his young time, and afterward in going along with him still to his death, and in death, *my God, my God* still. He would own God to be his God still, when God had deserted him to his sense and feeling, yet *my God* still. So God was Christs God

God, as Chriſt was man: take Chriſt as mediator, God is the God of Chriſt; for God the Father hath by his Authority put on Chriſt whatſoever he hath. The Father hath ſent him into the world. The Father ſealed him, the Father ſet him out as a propitiation for our ſins. The Father hath declared him, and annointed him, and all theſe tearms of Authority, whereby the Father hath ſhewed himſelf to be Chriſts God, even in his office of Mediatorſhip. So in regard of the care of his perſon, from his Mothers womb, and for ever, and in regard of his office as Mediator, he might well ſay, *I go to my God.* In regard of the intimate familiarity, and acquaintance, maintained even on the Croſſe, he might ſay, *my God.*

But the comfort of it lyeth in the ſecond clauſe, That as God is the God of Chriſt, ſo he is our God, becauſe he is the God of Chriſt.

What is it to be a God to any? In a word to be a God, is to be all-ſufficient to any, to be ſole-ſufficient, and to be ſelf-ſufficient.

To be a God, is to be all-ſufficient for every Creature, to be all-ſufficient,

ent, when nothing else can be suffi-
ent. And to be self-sufficient, to
sufficient of himself, and therefore
reduce all back again to himself. No
God is a God of himself, for himself
and by himself. God is all-sufficien
self-sufficient, sole-sufficient; a
whatsoever the Creature hath, it ha
it from him. There is (in a word
in God, a sufficiency for all good an
happiness, and an efficiency to app
that sufficiency for the good of th
Creature. And in particular to be
God to any, is to do that for a Cre-
ture, that no Creature in the world
can do but God. To make it of no-
thing, to free it from misery, that i
is beset withall, when no other can
free it, to recover it again. God is
Jehovah, that hath a being of himself,
giveth being to the Creatures, that can
make the Creature of nothing, and
being something, can make it no-
thing.

Now, if God be a God to any, he
is not only to give being to us, in a
certain rank of Creatures, as we are
advanced above other Creatures, as
to have a being, or a life of growing,

or

or a life of sense, or to advance us to a life of Creatures indowed with reason, whereby we are common in that fashion with Angels, and understand God himself. Alas, this were a poor priviledge, if it went no farther, then to set us in that rank of Creatures, though a great favour. But considering us in a lapsed estate, it is a poor favour to leave us here. And therefore God is said to be our God now in a state of grace, when he advanceth us to an higher being and life, then all this, to a life of grace here, and of glory hereafter. When out of his soveraignty and power, he reduceth all to help forward his main end, the salvation of his in peculiar. So God is a God in peculiar of some that he taketh out of base mankind. There is a world taken out of the world, as *Augustine* useth to speak. And thus he is a God not to bestow a life of grace, and supernatural being here, but a glorious condition hereafter in Heaven; and to make all things serviceable to that, that we may say, *all is ours, because we are Christs, and Christ is Gods.* So that whatsoever

God our God in the state of grace.

1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.

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befalleth a Christian, is serviceable, and conducible to the main and last end. And that is for God to be God indeed, to make us his in Christ Jesus, to give us a new Creation, and a new State, better then at first.

The Covenant of grace founded on Christ.

Now, what is the foundation of this, that God is our God in the Covenant of grace? we say it is founded on Christ, God is Christs God, and then our God, and that is the reason why Christ is called *Emanuel*, which is as much as to say, as it is expounded, *God with us*. Not only because when he took our nature on him, there was God and man in one person, but the meaning of the word is, Christ is *Emanuel*, God with us, by being God in our nature, and satisfying divine justice in our nature, hath brought God the Father, and us together into a sweet Covenant. So that God may be our God, and our Father, notwithstanding his justice, because all is satisfied by Christ, who took our nature to die for us. Christ is *Emanuel*, because he hath made God and us one. So that God is our God, and not only so, but our Father in

in him. Thus you see how it cometh to passe, that God is our Father by Christ, who came to bring us again to God; as his whole office was to bring a few that had been singled out of mankind to God again, from whom they fell; for we all had communion with God in *Adam*, but we lost it, and now must be brought again to God, which must be done by Christ, God and man.

Thus much for the foundation of the point, That God is Christs God, and God in Christ is our God, to do all things for us, to bring us to an happy condition here, and an everlasting happy condition in Heaven.

We see here, it is brought as a ground of comfort, and so indeed it is. And we may observe from hence, That now by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, God is not only become a Father to us, but a God. This is a ground of many cõforts, *go tell my Disciples*, now I am risen again, & therefore justice is satisfied, and now they may have lively hope of a better condition hereafter. For God is my God, that hath raised me up, and who will raise up mine too: so that now we

By vertue of Christs resurrection, God is not only our Father but our God.

are copartners with Christ, shareth with him in the Fatherhood of God, and God is God in common with Christ and us.

This may well be brought as a point of comfort, if there were any comfort in the world of sweeter efficacy then this, our Saviour would have sent it to his Disciples. Comfort being his main Office, and his main end, he would have the best comfort after his best Resurrection. And he picks this from amongst them all. *Go tell them, I go to my Father, and their Father, to my God, and their God.* And therefore it is a pregnant comfort, and indeed no heart can conceive the comfort of it, that we have interest together with Christ in God, and with the Fatherhood of God. And both these the Scripture joyneth together, 2*Cor.* 2.6. *I will be your Father, and your God.*

God our God in covenant with Christ.

To unfold the comforts more, God is said to be our God in Covenant in Christ. He is the God of Christ, and therefore of us; because he hath made himself over to us. A thing is said to be another mans, when the Title is

past to another man. Now God hath as it were, past over himself to his believing Children, and Members of Christ. He hath made over himself to them to be their God, as he was the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the *Patriarks*, *Prophets*, and *Apostles*: so he is of every good believing Christian, to the end of the world. God maketh himself over to be theirs, and (as the Scriptures stile is) he is their portion and their Inheritance, a blessed portion, a blessed inheritance, more to us, then if all the world were ours, then if Heaven were ours, then if ten thousand worlds were ours; for he is our God that can create millions of worlds more then this, if it were needful. *Habet omnia, qui habet habentem omnia.* He hath all things, that hath him in Covenant that hath all things. And therefore when the Scripture saith, *I go to their God*, it implyeth, I go to him, that is, all in all to them, that is larger then their hearts can be; for what heart can conceive the fulnesse of the comforts arising from hence, *that God is our God*. Many know they need

need comfort of such a transcendent nature. The heart of man is so distrustful, so faithless, and the conscience is such a clamorous thing, and therefore he cannot think this is too much. I beseech you therefore, do not lose the comfort of it, that in Christ God is our God; though we can say of nothing else it is ours, perhaps we cannot say, great houses are ours, or great friends are ours, or Inheritances ours, that is no matter, we can say, that is ours, which is infinitely more then that. We can say, God is ours in Christ. Nay, being exhorted to say by the spirit of faith, that God is ours in Christ, all things in the world are ours. As you have it in that place of Scripture, *All things are yours*, why? *because you are Christs, and Christ is Gods.* Whether things present, or things to come, *Paul*, *Apollos*, *Cephas*, life, death, all is yours, you are Christs, and Christ is Gods, that is, all things must by a command from God, conspire to make us happy, affliction, or Satan, or death, or trouble of conscience, or desertion, or every thing to help us to Heaven.

Intereſt in God great comfort.

Even afflictions & Satan himself conspires to make us happy.

Heaven. The curse is taken away, and there is a blessing hid in every thing that befalleth a Christian, to bring him to Heaven: therefore it is a comfort of infinite extent. All is yours, because God is yours.

You shall see the extent of the comforts further by retail, as it were. If God be ours, then all is ours too; what be they? the Scripture telleth you, and I should spend too much time in unfolding of them.

1. If God be ours, his wisdom must needs be ours, to find out wayes to do us good; for his infinite wisdom hath found out a way in Christ by satisfaction of his justice to bring us to Heaven. He can make us go beyond all the policy of our Neighbors; for his wisdom is ours.

2. If we be in danger, his power is ours, to bring us out.

3. If we have sinned, his mercy is ours to forgive us. He himself being ours, his mercy must needs be ours. The whole being ours, it followeth out of the strength of reason, that the parts also must be ours.

4. In any want, his allsufficiency is ours,

ours, to supply it, or to turn it to good, and make it up in a better kind.

5. In a word, God being ours, whatsoever is in God, whatsoever God can do, whatsoever he hath is ours, because himself is ours. And therefore I beseech you, make this use of it, to get into Christ by faith, to be one with Christ, that so God may be our God. Get faith above all graces, the grace of union, and the grace of communion, that being one with Christ, we are one with him. God being ours, all is ours, yea the worst thing in the world is ours.

If God be not ours, it is no matter what else is ours. Alas, all things must be taken from us, we know not how soon, and we taken from all things else. What if we had a Kingdom, as *Saul* had, if we be forsaken of God, as he was. What if we had Paradise, if we offend God, we shall be cast out? What if we had the dignity to be Apostles, if with *Judas* we have not God, what will all come to? What if a man should enjoy all the world, if out of Christ, it would yield

yield him no comfort. As the Emperor ſaid, I have gone through all varieties of conditions, *Et nihil mihi prodit*: but it hath done me no good. If we had all what is it, but *vanity of vanities*, and not only ſo, but *vexation*. Now when we have God to be our God, he is able to fill the ſoul. He is larger then the ſoul, and he is able to quiet the ſoul, he is the reſt of the ſoul, the ſoul is quiet, in him is the Center, as the place of quiet. If God be ours, then the ſoul reſteth in it; for God filleth the ſoul, and quiets the ſoul, and hath alwayes freſh comforts for the ſoul, infinite ſtill to all eternity. There is nothing in the world, but we do as it were *deflorare*, take away the flower of it by uſe, and it becometh ſtale. Though a man continue many thouſand years in the world, yet he will be weary of all things in the world, becauſe there is no freſhneſs in them. It is finite, and the ſoul is larger then the comforts of the world. But in God is a ſpring of freſh comforts to everlaſting. Conſider the things that inable him to be our God, to fill the ſoul, and to

Eccleſ. 1. 2. Eccleſ. 2. 17.

be

be larger then the soul, to quiet, and calm the soul in all the troubles of it, and then to have fresh springs of comforts, what a comfort is this to have God, for our God?

Never rest till God be made our portion.

Let it therefore raise up our souls to labor after our God, and never rest till we have some interest in this great portion of God, to be our God. When we can by faith go out of our selves to Christ, and lay a right and just claim to God to be our God: this is a comfort that reacheth from everlasting to everlasting. It giveth us forgiveness of sins, when we had lost our selves, because we are in Christ he hath forgiven us. In all extremities and troubles, when no creature can comfort us, it is his glory to shew himself a God. It reacheth to the Resurrection of the body; God is *Abrahams*, and *Isaacks*, and *Jacobs* God, when dead, because he was the God of whole *Abraham*, *Isaack* and *Jacob*, and therefore of soul and body. And it reacheth from all favours of this world, so far as is for our good, to all eternity, being our *God*, he will protect us from all extremities in this

this world, he will speak comfort to our souls, which nothing can do but God. When we be dead, he will raise up our dust, because he is our whole God, the God of our souls and bodies, and we shall be for ever with the Lord. It is a comfort of wonderfull extent.

Use 1. Let us therefore make this use of it. *L*abour to make him so to us; for as he is to us, so God by his spirit is our comforter, who being satisfied, giveth us his spirit. We must make God our *God*, and then he will be a *God* unto us. These be mutual, whereſoever they be, whereſoever *God* is *God* to any, they by the spirit obtained by Christ, have grace to make him so to themselves. What is it for us to make *God* a *God* to us? It is this, to set up *God* a throne in our hearts, and to give him a Soveraignty over all things in the world, that we may say in truth of heart, *God* is our joy, *God* is our comfort, *God* is our rock, *God* is all in all to us. When we give him supremacy of affection above all the world, we esteem nothing above him, we value him above

God our joy, our comfort, our Rock, our all.

all esteem, his loving kindness is better then life it self; for else we do not make him a *God* to us, and then it is no comfort to hear all the comforts spoken of before. For all to whom he is a God in the Covenant of grace, and have hearts to make him so, the spirit raiseth up their affections to make him a God to themselves. *Amor tuus, Deus tuus*, as it is said of old, what we love most is our God. What we joy most in is our God, what we relie and trust in most, is our God, *as it was said of the wedge of gold*. And therefore if any thing hath our affections more then God, or equal with God, that we make our *God*. It is a *quære* of the greatest concernment in the world, to put to our hearts. What do I make my God? as *David* putteth the *quære* to himself: now Lord, what is my hope, is it not in thee? And so put this *quære* to our selves. Lord what is my joy, what is my hope, what is my trust, what is my comfort, is it not in thee? If our hearts cannot make an answer to this in some sincerity, surely as yet we have not made God our God.

Examine our hearts what we make our God.

Time

Time may be, that he may be so; but till by the spirit of God we be brought to see an emptiness, and vanity in the Creature, and a nothingnesse in all, in comparison of *God*, that we can say, *whom have I in Heaven but thee?* We have not comfort, because we do not make him ours by a spirit of mutuallity. Where there is a Covenant of grace, there must be a mutual making of God our God, as he maketh himself to us.

Alas we may be ashamed of it, the best do often forget themselves. Oh how do men value the favours of a man, and the promises of a man, the seal of a man for such, and such a benifice, and how doth it grieve them to have the frowns of flesh and blood, the frowns of greatness; but when their Consciences tell them they are under guilt of many sins, and God is not in good tearms with them, how doth this affect them? and when their consciences cannot say, they have promises sealed in Christ, of the favours and mercies of God here, and hereafter: alas it is dead comfort, Ἐμοὶ τὸ παρὸν give me that which is

It is of eternal concernment, to make God our God.

present, and take you that which is to come, is the Language of both. How few can say from sincerity of heart, that they make good to be their God. And therefore it is of greater concernment then we take it.

Use 2. As it is a ground and foundation of comfort, so of all obedience to God, as it is prefixed before the Commandements, *I am the Lord your God*, you shall have no other Gods but me, & do all in obedience to me from this ground. But much more now; then he was the Lord God that brought them out of Egypt. But now God may prefix, I am your Lord God in Christ, that have brought you from hell and damnation, that intend you Heaven and happiness, and therefore do so, and so. Since this is the spring of all obedience, we ought to labor to make it good, and often to examine our selves, as before, what we make our God, and what we pitch our affections on. Alas, is our soul for any thing but God? hath not God made us for himself? and will our hearts rest in any thing but God? why then should we love vanity, and befot our selves? when death

Exo. 20. 2.

Do all for God in obedience

death comes, they may ſay as *Saul* ſaid, *The Philiſtins are upon me, and God hath forſaken me.* Death is on me, trouble, ſickneſs, vexation of conſcience is on me, and God hath forſaken me, I have no God to go to, what a miſerable eſtate is this? And therefore I beſeech you, let us labor to have intereſt in the Covenant of grace, to make it good, that God is our God in Jeſus Chriſt.

God gives us our being and wel being, and doth all for us till we come to Heaven.

Who giveth us a being to be Chriſtians, to have a new nature, to have a good being, but God? who maintaineth and preſerveth that being, but God? and who keepeth and preſerveth us, till we get into a glorious being in Heaven; but God, who is all-ſufficient, ſelf-ſufficient, ſole-ſufficient, only ſufficient, this God is our God now in Chriſt.

God is to us in a more ſpecial ſingular manner, then to other Creatures, becauſe he hath raiſed us to a more excellent being, not only as men, we being in the higheſt rank of Creatures next the Angels, and ſo he is a God to us, more then to inferior Creatures, that have a more circum-

scrib'd and narrow being. Man hath a large being, a reasonable soul, and is fitted by nature to have communion with God, who is wisdom it self, and with Angels; but all this were little comfort, unless we had higher degrees of being then this. If God be our God in Christ, we have a spiritual being, which is as much above the dignity and prerogative of our ordinary being, as our being by nature is above the basest Creature in the world. And so God setteth a stile upon us sutable to the excellency of our spirituall being: there is nothing excellent in the world, but we are learned by it. Now to let out the advancement and excellency of the dignity we have from God in a special manner, to be *Sons*, *Jewels*, his *Portion*, his *diadem*, to be whatsoever you can imagine, that is glorious and excellent. An excellent condition, though spiritual, and concealed from the world. Gods Children are concealed men, as you shall see afterward, they be hidden men, the world taketh no notice of them, because their excellency is seen with

an-

mother eye, then the world hath. The God of the world blindeth the eyes of worldlings. They cannot see into the excellency of Gods Children, no more then they can know *God* himself, and Christ himself. So you see what it is to be a *God* in nature and in grace, to be all in all unto us, to have our whole subsistance, and dependence in him, *in him we live and move, and have our being*, and well-being.

In this, our excellency consisteth, that *God* is our *God* in Christ, who was *God*, and that he might bring *God* and us to good tearms together, that he might make *God* our *God*, he was *Emanuel*, God with us, to make God with us in favour and love. The God-head is neareft the humane nature of Christ, of any Creature, it is nearer to Christ then to the Angels; for God hath not taken the Angels into hypostatical union to be in the same person; but God in Christ is so near our nature, that there is an hypostatical union, they make one person, our nature being taken into the second person. By reason of this

Humane nature nearer to Christ then the nature of the Angels

near union of the God-head to our nature cometh that comfort and near union between God and our nature, whereby *God* hath ſweet communion with us in Chriſt. *God* by his ſpirit, though not hypoſtatically, yet graciouſly is one with us, and hath communion with us now as his Children: ſo that ſweet entercourſe between *God* and us now, is founded upon the nearneſs of the god-head to our nature in Chriſt, in whom it is neareſt of all, in whom it is advanced above the angelical nature. And therefore our bleſſed Saviour might well ſay, *I go to my God, and your God,* to his *God* firſt, and then to our *God.*

Now we may ſay, *God* is our *God,* and upon good grounds, becauſe *God* is Chriſts *God,* and in him our *God,* which is a point of ſingular comfort, and therefore I will inlarge my ſelf further in it.

Doct. *Doct.* For *God* to be our *God,* eſpecially in having that in our hearts unfolded, in regard of our ſpirits and beſt being, is the moſt fundamental comfort that we have. For from this

this, that God is our God, commeth all that we have that is good in nature and grace. Whatsoever is comfortable commeth from this spring, That God is Christ, is our God, our reconciled God. That Gods nature, and ours now, are in good tearms.

What God is, what he is able to do, what he hath, all is ours.

Beloved, what cannot we expect from God, that is now becom our God? what he is, what he is able to do, what he hath, all is ours, considering himself is ours. If we have the field, we have the pearl in the field. And therefore the wise Merchant in the Gospel, sold all for the field, wherein the treasure was. We have the field it self in having God, and we have all that God is, or can do for us for our good, even as we have Christ, and all that Christ is, or hath done, and suffered, and injoyeth, *all is ours, because we are Christs, and Christ is Gods*, as the Apostle saith, so that having God, we have all, because we have him that possesseth all, the Creator of all, and preserver of all, and disposer of all.

But to clear an objection a little, if *God* be ours, and all things else,

how comes it that we want so many things.

Answ. I answer, it is our own fault for the most part, we want faith to make use of, and improve this comfort. And then again we want nothing that is for our good, want it self is for our good. And observe this, our *God* is so powerful a *God*, that he maketh the worst things we suffer, a means to convey the greatest good oftentimes to us. If *God* be our *God* and Father in Christ, why have we sins? why vexed with the Devil? why persecuted with men? why streightned thus and thus and thus? all this is for our good. *God* is our *God* by these, and in the midst of these, and is never more our *God*, then in the greatest extremity of all; for then we come nearest the Fountain: there is near and sweet communion between this *God* and us, when we take of the fountain. When the means are drawn away, the Conduits of conveyance, and we have nothing to go to, but *God* immediatly: there is sweet communion, and sweetest comfort in Heaven; we shall have *God* in Christ, who will be all

Want it self is for the good of Gods people.

in

in all unto us. We shall need no Magistracy, Ministery, food, raiment, or defence against cold, or injury; we shall be out of the reach of Satan, and all enemies, *God* will be all in all immediatly. The same *God* is all in all to us, either by means, or immediately. When means fail he conveyeth his sweetness, and his power immediatly, but ordinarily by means; And what sight doth in Heaven, faith doth now in some proportion; for as sight in Heaven seeth *God* in Christ, all in all, and injoyeth that happy vision, so faith seeth *God* to be all in all, and Christ to be all in all, though in an inferior degree to sight and clearness of vision: yet for the capacity of this life, we injoy *God* now, as they do in Heaven. We have inward comforts when most deserted. *God* was never more near our blessed Saviour, then on the Crosse, when he cryed, *my God, my God, &c.* for then he found invincible strength, supporting him in the great undertaking under the wrath of his Father. And so *God* is never neerer, then in extremity. In strength, though not in sense and feel-

God all in all immediatly in Heaven.

feeling; and oftentimes in feeling it self, we never have sweeter comforts, then in the want of all outward comforts whatsoever, when nothing else can comfort us but the presence of *God*. And we must know besides that, the state of a Christian in this world, is an hidden condition; for it is to the eye of faith, not of sense; and therefore *God* is a *God* to his, though the world see it not. There is a secret hidden influence, a secret passage between Heaven and earth, that none seeth. Who observeth the influence of the Sun, or the sweet influence of the Starres upon the earth? light we see; but there is a secret influence pierceth deeper then the light, to the very bowels of the earth whence metals come. Where no light comes, there is an influence, though not discerned, and much more can there be influence of strength and power, and hidden comfort, though there be no sight. Cannot *God* be our *God*, in regard of strength, supporting and supplying, though there be no visible and sensible comfort, though we see it not our selves. Certainly the soul is upheld

held by an invincible ſtrength in the worſt condition that can be. Therefore this is true, that *God* is our *God* in all conditions.

Let us make uſe of this. To what uſe is riches and friends, if we do not uſe them? to what uſe is *God* and Chriſt, if we uſe them not? *Noſtrorum eſt, utamur noſtro bono.* He is ours, let us uſe him for our ſpecial good on all occaſions. Oh that we had faith anſwerable to our prerogative, it is a prerogative more then Heaven and earth, that *God* is ours, and had we faith ſuitable, what kind of perſons ſhould we be in grace and comfort, and whatſoever is good? Therefore labor to make uſe of it; but more of this after we have ſpoken of ſome rules of tryal, becauſe whatſoever I may ſay this way may be miſapplied. They be excellent comforts; but perhaps ſaith the diſtreſſed ſoul, they belong not to me; to whom it doth belong: perhaps it belongeth to me, ſaith another that is a ſtranger, and a carnal man, to whom it doth not belong. Therefore our Saviour giveth ſome notes of diſtinctions, to know whe- Uſe.

whether *God* be our *God* or no. Not to be much in the argument, yet to be plain in it.

1. *God* is their *God* in this peculiar manner that I speak, that is in the Covenant of grace, not otherwise, and I speak not what *God* is by creation of man; for so the Devil is *God*, and every Creature. But the question is, whom *God* is a *God* to in the nearest bond of the covenant of grace? that is the only comfortable relation that can be; for if *God* be not our *God* in that, all other comforts will be nothing. It is better we be no Creatures at all, then not Creatures in the covenant of grace. It is therefore worthy the commending to you, especially considering our naughty hearts are prone to deceive us, Satan and melancholly, and temptations do make some refuse the comfort, and some presumptuous persons to snatch at it, when it doth not belong to them. Those to whom *God* is a *God* indeed, in a sweet relation of the Covenant of grace to be their *God*, as to the Patriarks, Prophets, & Christ & the Apostles, he giveth his holy spirit

to

to witness so much to them. Though the voice of the spirit is not alwayes heard in the best Children of *God*, yet he giveth them the holy spirit, that though it doth not alwayes witness, yet it alwayes works something in them, which may be an evidence that they are *Gods*.

2. Now the spirit of adoption and Sonship is known by a spirit of supplication especially. Whom *God* is a *God* to, he vouchsafeth a spirit of prayer to go to him in all their necessities, which is an issue or branch of their faith. He giveth them faith to believe it, and prayer to make use of it; for *God* will not give this great priviledge, without heart to make use of it, which is done by faith and prayer; and prayer is nothing but the frame of faith, *Acts* 9. As soon as *Paul* was a good man, presently after his conversion, *Behold he prayeth*. The child cryeth, as soon as born, and the child of *God* is known by his praying; as soon as he is converted, an intercourse is opened between *God* and the soul, which a christian soul will never neglect. If they are plac't in the worst

worst condition, they will pray to *God*, or at least sigh and groan, which is a prayer that *God* can make sense of.

Simile, Those that have any strong places of defence in trouble, they will be sure to fly to that in times of war, they will betake them to their Castle, and place of munition. And so they that be Gods in time of danger, run presently to God, he is their rock, their refuge, and place of defence, repair to him by faith and prayer. *The name of the Lord is a Tower of defence, the*
Pro. 18.10 *righteous in trouble fly thither, and they are safe.* A man may know what his God is, by his retyring in times of extremity. Your carnal man if he hath any place to retire to, it is to his friends, to his purse to bring him out. He will go to that, which his instinct will specially lead him to in times of trouble. As every Creature together with the nature of it, hath received an instinct from God, to go to the place of refuge, wherein it is safe, as the weakest Creature hath strongest refuge. The Conies a poor weak Creature, hide themselves most

strongly,

strongly, out of instinct they have their own weakness. So Gods Child being privy of his weakness, and need of support and strength, hath the strongest support that may be, and runneth to his God. Worldly men have many shifts, as the wily Fox hath; but a Christian hath but one, but that is a great one, he goeth to his God in time of need. And therefore you may know who is in covenant with God in times of extremity, especially, by a spirit of faith, a spirit of prayer.

Go to God in things of extremity, by faith and prayer.

In times of extremity, no man but a Christian can pray with any comfort, with any sweet familiarity, *Abba Father*; But they be like *Pharaoh*: Go *Moses, pray to your God.* He had no such familiarity with *God* as to pray for himself. And so carnal men will say; *pray to your God.* And many like Devils, will have no cõmunion with *God* in their prosperity, but their whole life is a provoking of *God* to emnity by swearing, loose, debauched, irregular Carriages, hateful even to moral men: their hearts tell them they be even like Satan. *What*

Exo. 9. 28.

doth

dost thou come to torment us before our time? what hast thou to do with us? what have they to do with God? they have scarce a Bible in their Chambers. If one, it is for fashion sake. And that they may not appear to be naught, they will hold community in publick assemblies; but in private familiarity they have nothing to do with it. The shew of Religion goeth under an opprobrious name; but if they would put off the shew, it were nothing, and not make ostentation of what they are not; but they have no communion with God in prayer. They will go for *Gods* people, and own him for their *God*, when they have no trading with him, so much as by prayer. Take heed we deceive not our selves, I beseech you, salvation dependeth upon it.

The wicked outwardly make a shew to fear God; but hate him in their hearts.

3. We may further try, whether our claim of *God* to be our *God* be a good claim, on good grounds, by our siding, by our partaking; for those whom *God* is a *God* to in a particular manner, will be sure to side with *God*. *God* hath two things in the world, he prizes more then all the

world

world, that is, his Children and Church. His cause and Religion, they that be *Gods*, will be sure to side with the Church, they will stand and fall with the Church, and the cause of Religion, they will live and die with it. But a carnal Polititian, that hath perhaps great parts of nature, he is Ἀλλὰ σὺς ἀλλῦς as the *Grecian* calleth him, they be for all turns, they can bring themselves to any figure, like water that will receive any figure. Take it, put it into a Vessel that is square, it will be square; put it into a round Vessel, it will be round. How can they own *God* for their *God* when they will not seek him, and they are yet to chuse their *God* and Religion. And because they will be sure to be safe in all times, they will own no Religion in any time. And beloved, is it possible any such should say with confidence, God is their God; will he own them that will not own him nor his Church, nor his cause? you know *Jehu* cried out, who is on my side, who? cast her out. And so God in doubtful times of danger, cryeth out, who

A carnal man professes his own safety before the advancement of Religion.

who is on my side, who? stand out, appear, if you be on my side, if you be on my side, own my cause, if you be not on my side, if you have no degree of goodness, it will appear. Christian wisdom is one thing, carnal policy is another thing. *The wisdom of the flesh is emnity with God.* Many applaud, and think themselves for some body in this kind; but this wisdom is emnity it self against God. When a man will be wise in a distinct kind of wisdom from God, when he will have a cause severed from God, & will not side with God, he must look to

Rom. 7. 8.

The fearful condition of a wicked man at the hour of death.

God will accompt him his enemy and make him his; but especially in the hour of death, and deep extremity, he shall not be able to look God in the face, to whom he hath been a traitor in the Church, and in the cause of Religion. And therefore as we will be able to own God for our God, especially in doubtful and dangerous times, side with the Church, and side with Religion. It was objected to that good *Jehonadab:* a good man, have we any thing to do with Gods enemies? Now there

Who are Gods enemies.

two sorts of enemies, that we are
pecially to have nothing to do
withall, if we side with God, enemies
within us, and enemies without us.
n within us, we must take part a-
inst our sins, take Gods part, and
spirits part against corrupt moti-
s and affections. Divinity must be-
n from within, else it is faction
thout. It is not Religion, but facti-
, if the Religion begin not in our
arts, and if we hate not sin in our
lves. Where there is true antipathy,
e nearer any thing is that is oppo-
e to our nature, the more hateful it
. He that hateth a Toad, hateth it
his bosom most of all. And he that
ates sin, as sin, hates it in his own
art most of all. And therefore they
at will pretend Religion, and be
ught in their own particular, it
meth not from a true principle; for
ey that will side with God, side
ith God in their own hearts, and be
od men in their own particulars: A Christian is a good man in his own particular.
herefore I beseech you, try your
lves by this.

Likewise, when men esteem sinne
Gods enemy whereſoever they see it,
and so far as their authority and pow-

er

er reacheth, they will take Gods part in themselves against themselves, and in the world too. I will not inlarge the point, because it cometh in by way of tryal, and I cannot but touch it as a tryal. Thus you see how we may know whether we be Gods or no, by owning his cause, and siding with him: you have some expressions in Scripture to this purpose. *Micah* 4. 5. *All people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.* Every man will walk and converse in the name of his God, they will own their God, and take part with him, and we will walk in the name of our God for ever and ever, and own his cause at all times, and constantly for ever, and ever.

And likewise in *Esay* 44. speaking of gratious times there, when men shall be bold for the Lord, as in all times some men will. One shall say I am the Lords, and another shall call himself by the name of *Jacob*, and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord, and tearm himself *Israel*. God shall have his tongue, his hand, and

all. He shall say I am the Lords, shall call himself by the name of God, he shall subscribe to it, and am the cause.

4. Again, if we would know whether God be our God, we must know whether we may lay just claim to our God, as a peculiar God to us, or no, and that way in which God sheweth himself to be a God in peculiar respect to us.

Quest. Now how doth God shew himself God in a peculiar respect to his children?

Answ. He sheweth himself to have a peculiar respect to them.

1. By peculiar gifts, when he gives to them, that which he giveth to none else: shall we imagine God to be our God, by common gifts, and common graces? no; for thou comest to hear the word, so *Herod* did. Thou receivest the Sacrament, so did *Judas*, so did *Simon Magus*. Thou hearest the truth with some joy, so did the third ground. Thou hast excellent parts, so hath the Devil himself.

But thou art in such a place of the Church,

Church, teacheſt others, ſo did *Jude*. Are theſe evidences to try whether we be Gods, or no? what then is the peculiar gift, and love-token that God beſtowes upon his favorites? they be the graces of his ſpirit, eſpecially in regard of God, an humble broken heart, and a believing heart, and a lowly heart, that goeth out of itſelf, that goeth unto God by faith, and towards man full of love, which argueth a great deal of ſelf-denyal, when a man can love others with denyal of his own profit and eaſe. He that hath a humble, believing, lowly heart, hath more then all the world beſides; for he hath Gods peculiar gift. Many poor ſouls complain, as if God had no regard to them, and yet in the mean time, they have humble, broken hearts, which is more then if they had all the wealth and worth that the world hath, which have proud hearts never broken. The return of theſe favours will be comfort in death, and glory in Heaven. What will the fruit of a believing heart be? he hath God and Chriſt, if he hath a lowly large heart to do good,

The humble man more excellent then the proud.

good, he doth that which in the issue, all further his accompt at the day of judgement, and there is the love of God shewed in his special favour.

2. So the love of God especially, will be a special peculiar comfort, that the world is ignorant of, especially in times of extremity. Inward peace of conscience, inward joy, and inward comforts, these are signs of love, that God bestoweth upon a man when he will own him in the worst times, and speak peace to his soul, when nothing in the world will speak peace. When the Lyons roar, the great Lyons of the world roar in extremity, he hath inward peace and joy, and comforts of the holy Ghost, that inward intercourse of God with the soul, is a sign of Gods peculiar love, when God speaketh peace to the soul, when he sheweth the light of his countenance, which *David* in the 4th *Psalm* prefers before all outward comforts whatsoever. Gods revealing of himself, as the Scripture calleth it. When God revealeth himself to his, to be theirs, with peace and joy, and

Peace of conscience inward joy and comfort, signs of love.

comfort, accompanying it, this is peculiar.

3. Again, a peculiar favour and love-token of God, as to have seasonable and sanctifying correction. To have corrections when they be seasonable, when we be in a way of straying, and God will bring us home by correction, and when we have sanctifying correction, we find by experience, that all is turned to our good. If I find any thing turn me to my God, I know I am his: if my Cross be seasonable, and sanctified, he is my God; for he takes that course with me, which he takes with his own people. These be singular signs of Gods love, when he bestoweth the graces of his spirit, his comforts, peace and joy, though not largely, yet so much as shall sustain the soul. And then when he seasonably meeteth us, and will not suffer us to thrive in an evil course. Oh it is a judgment of judgements, to be hardned in sinful courses of life; how can it but end in desperation at length? and therefore it is a great favour to be chastized, it sheweth, we are Sons, and

not

not Bastards. Thus we see how we may lay just claim to this, that God is our God in a peculiar manner.

5. To name but one more, to distinguish a spirit of presumption, from a spirit of faith and truth, that God is our God, is this.

1. If we have grace to answer his dealings towards us. When we can eccho to Gods dealings; God hath chosen us, if we have grace to chuse him for our God. We may know he hath called us effectually, when we answer Gods call: when he biddeth us believe, he giveth us an influence of power, to be able to say, *I believe, Lord help my unbelief.* Mark 9.24 We may know, he loveth us when we reflect love again, and love him; we may know he compasseth us, when we imbrace him; we may know he delighteth in us, when we can delight in him, and his Servants. Whence is the strength of this Argument? from hence. All good things, whatsoever we do from God, is but by reflection. God shineth on us first, God owneth us for his first, and God must do so in the order

of causes. God being the spring of all goodness, he must begin, we love him because he loved us first, else we could never love him: therefore if we love him and his truth, he loveth us, that is sure. *What have I in Heaven but thee, and in earth in comparison of thee?* surely he owneth us, because in order of causes, we can have nothing but from him first.

Psal. 73. 25.

2. And then again, out of the nature of conscience, if we can go boldly to him as a reconciled God, notwithstanding guilt of conscience, it is a sign he hath obtained peace of conscience, because it is the nature of conscience, if it hath not peace from God, not to dare to appear in Gods presence. So then, when there is inward peace and love, answering to Gods love, choice answerable to Gods choice, apprehending of him, answerable to his apprehension, this reflection and return, and rebounding back to God, is an invincible argument, that God hath first shined upon that soul. God sometimes will let us see things in the effect, and hide them in the cause. Perhaps he wil not perswade by his spirit, that he loveth us,

Arguments of Gods shining upon the soul.

us, hath choſen us, and that we are his; but he will work ſomething in our hearts, becauſe he will have us ſearch our ſpirits, what good thing he hath wrought, what love, what choice of the beſt ſide are in any of theſe; ſurely then God is theirs, though there be not an open voice, yet we may know, God hath loved this ſoul, and ſpoken peace to that ſoul, becauſe we can return nothing to God, but he muſt ſhine on us firſt.

Therefore beloved, let us make uſe of this, and let us take heed of ſacrilegious uſurpations, that we do not uſurp upon Gods houſe, or God in a peculiar reſpect. Indeed we may come to God, as his Creatures, we are the workmanſhip of thy hands, and ſay the truth, though we be in a wicked courſe of life, but to ſay thou art my God in Chriſt, I am thine, thou haſt choſen me for thine; when we have not choſen him for our God, nor loved him, nor his cauſe, nor ſided with him, nor have any ſtamp of him on the ſoul, have nothing but common favour that caſtawayes have, as well as we, and the

Caution.

To call God our God, when he is not ſo, is an uſurpation full of danger.

Devils as well as we, (for the Devils go beyond all men in parts,) and yet to usurp the prerogative of being Gods in a peculiar manner, and to be bold with the holy things of God, as if we were of his family; this is a dangerous usurpation, take heed of it. And therefore they that live in courses of rebellion, and resolve not to mend, they take the holy things of God, as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal* 50. in an holy indignation, *what art thou that takest my word in thy mouth, since thou hatest to be reformed.* Thou art an enemy to God and goodness, and wilt be so; thou art in a course of rebellion, and wilt be so. The Devils works you do, and will do; can we not take the word of the Covenant into our mouths, and shall we take the seal of the Covenant? therefore resolve to amend, else have nothing to do with God, do not add one sin to another. It is Childrens food, and not for Doggs, it belongeth to them of the family. If thou be none of the Family, what hast thou to do with them? If thou be of the Family, whatsoever thy infirmities are, thou

Psal. 50. 16, 17.

maist

maist come boldly; for the seals are to strengthen our weak faith. When the Father is Father of a Child, the Father will not cast away the Child for breaking out with deformity, or lameness; when God hath taken us into his Family, infirmities cannot discard us. But I speak of them, that in a wilful opposite course of sin shew they never had to do with God in familiar entercourse, God never gave them a spirit to alter their natures. Propriety and proportion, and suitableness of disposition go together, propriety joyneth with suitableness; where God owneth any man, he makes them like himself by his word and spirit, that their natures shall be even and agreeable to holy things, shall have a taste of holy things. And where there is not suitableness of holy things, there is no propriety. Will God own a man, and not make him suitable? will God take his friend, and not give him a friendly nature? he will not; for he first fitteth our natures for communion with himself, else there can be no propriety. Let us not deceive our selves; but if we

Simile.

Propriety, by fitting our natures for communion with God.

find some beginnings of grace, and can say without arrogancy, or usurpation, *doubtless thou art our Father, our God*, we be not worthy to be thine; but we be thine. If we finde something that cast-awayes cannot have, some grief of heart for sin, some faith, some little measure of love, some love of truth, and inclination to the best things, then we may come boldly to increase our familiarity, and communion with God; but otherwise it is dangerous to come to God, we approach a consuming fire, *who shall dwell in everlasting burnings?* say they in *Isaiah*, and if God be not in covenant with us, oh he will be consuming fire, everlasting burnings, and we but stubble, & it will increase spiritual judgment in us, hardness of heart, and going on from sin, to sin, till we be accursed for sin: therefore it is a fearful thing to be given up to hardness of heart, they that do continue in sin, God giveth them up to hardness of heart, to be insensible of his dealings with them.

Heb. 12. 29
Esa. 33. 14

Use 3. If we can in any degree make it good, that God is our God, and

and we his people, then let us make uſe of it for our comfort in all times that we have a God to go to, though we have no friend in the world, yet we have him in whom all friends meet. If we have no comfort here, yet we have him in whom all comforts meet; for all concenter in him. He hath Father and friends, and worth and grace, and peace and comfort in him, and all is in him, if we go to him, we ſhall find a confluence of every thing that is good, ſuitable to any neceſſity of ours.

Comfort in our intereſt in God.

And therefore let us learn to ſingle out of God whatſoever may help us to be in covenant with him. He having made himſelf over to be ours, let us learn this wiſdom to ſingle out of God whatſoever is peculiar to our preſent condition; for conſidering he hath made himſelf a God to us, he is all-ſufficient for every turn: therefore out of his all-ſufficiency, take out whatſoever is fit for any particular exigency. Lord I am now in a ſtraight, and want wiſdom, thou in Chriſt haſt abundance of wiſdom. Chriſt hath in him all treaſures. I now want friends,

Particular exigencie ſupplyed by his all ſufficiency

I want counsel, I want help, I want strength, God hath a fulness of all this for his Children. He hath it not only to content himself, and look on his own happiness, but for his friends that be in covenant with him, that be in covenant with him, that be so near him, that he will own him to be their God. If you aske what is Religion? it is to know God, to have all-sufficiency in him for my good; and then to make use of him by dependance on him for that good, and by advancing of him in giving him the due honour and thanks of it. And therefore we deserve not the names of religious persons, if we do not study what he is to his Creatures in the Covenant of grace. Then make use of it by a spirit of dependency, and alwayes giving praise and thanks. This is our whole man, and what is all else? nothing but trouble and vanity. Get our bonds sealed, that he is our God, and then break with all the world beside, come what can come, or what will come, we are sure to be safe. It is a comfort of wonderful large extent. The use of the Sacra-

Religion is to know God, and to make use of him for good, to honor him, and to be thankful.

ment

ment is to ſeal that God is our God in particular, and that Chriſt is ours, as verily as the Bread and Wine are ours. And let us deſire the LORD to ſeal to every one of our ſouls, that are to have communion with him in particular, that he in Chriſt is ours. Chriſt with all his merits, and the fruits of them, forgiveneſs of ſin, and life everlaſting, as verily as the outward man partakes of the outward ſeals, and then we ſhall come, and go away with comfort, and be made partakers of that end and uſe of the Sacrament, for which our bleſſed Saviour inſtituted it.

Sacrament ſeals God to be ours.

Having ſpoken before of common favours which Devils and Caſtawayes may have, as well as we, I ſhall inlarge my ſelf a little in this, becauſe it is a point of concernment. As in other ſins we be like the Devil, ſo in this ſin a man is worſe then the Devil himſelf, if a man will be a common ſwearer, and oppoſer, and malitious againſt goodneſs, being only in love with ſome idle conceipt of his own, which he will have God himſelf ſtoop to, elſe he will not to Heaven: he will

Man by ſome ſins worſe then the Devil.

will not be saved but by his own foolery. A man that hath a bitter spirit against the power of grace, that is a common blasphemer, that carrieth a spight against Religion, for him to say, *God is his God*, the Devil will as well say so. He will say of *Paul* and *Sylas*, these are the people of God; but he will not say himself is. For a man to live in sins against Conscience, defend them, oppose all that oppoſeth his sins, and yet claim an interest, while that disposition standeth in him, it is more then satanical impudency, and it is extream hardening of the heart against all goodness; for how many thousands in the Church perish, and sink to Hell under this presumptuous conceipt, *I am Gods, and God is mine*, when the title is false, and the evidence false. And therefore is is a point deserving throughly to be examined continually, what those evidences of graces be, that we venture our souls and salvation upon. I will not stand much to presse the point. But you see the necessity of it, consider therefore I beseech you what I have said. If God be

be ours, there will be a ſeparation, where there is an owning of God for our God; There will be a ſeparation from all that is not his, as well as a gathering to them that be his. The work of Gods ſpirit in his Children, is like fire, which hath two properties, to ſever all heterogeneal and ſtrange ſtuffe and droſſe, and the like, and gather all the homogeneal ſtuffe of one nature. And ſo the works of the ſpirit gathereth to the ſoul ſo much as is good, and refines that, and ſevereth that which is contrary. That ſpirit of God, that telleth them that they be Gods, it is is a ſevering ſpirit, and a uniting ſpirit, it ſevers contraries, and it uniteth things of the ſame nature, there is a joyning to what is good, and a ſeparating of what is evil.

Gods ſpirit both a ſevering ſpirit, and an uniting ſpirit.

I will add this farther, that whereſoever on good title, we can ſay, *I am Gods*, there is a reflect act of the ſoul to ſay, *God is mine*. God hath put a light of reaſon and friendſhip into man. Now friendſhip ſtandeth in mutual office of duty and gift, where this is not, there is no friendſhip,

Friendſhip in mutual office of duty.

ſhip, no reconciliation, no owning on good tearms. The end why God ſaveth a company of men, and bringeth them to Heaven, the body of Chriſt, which we call the Church, it is, that he may have eternal communion with them in the Heavens, as he hath with the bleſſed Angels, and in Chriſt a nearer communion, then he hath with them. Now how can this communion be, unleſs we turn to God, unleſs we have ſomething to anſwer Gods love.

Doct. Again note, God is ours, becauſe Chriſt is ours, the Covenant is firſt made with Chriſt, and then with us. Whence we ſee a ground of particular application of that which we call particular faith, a ground of particular application, by a ſpirit of faith of God to us, and Chriſt to us, that God in Chriſt is my God, and your God.

God to be apprehended as he offers himſelf. The ground of this is, as God offereth himſelf, we muſt apprehend him; but Chriſt offers God, and he knoweth how to offer him. He teacheth us how God is to be preſented, and he preſenteth him as our God;

and

and our Father, and therefore let us entertain him, as ours. Thus you see a good ground of particular application of God the Father, and Christ to us in particular, in two respects, not only that every one in particular ought to have a particular faith, and not to think a general faith is enough to believe, as the Church believeth; but to have a particular faith of the object, not only of the subject, but of the object, that, that is his in particular, *I go to my Father and your Father.*

Particular application of Christ how grounded.

God is the Father, and the God of all the Elect, and only the Elect, and of every one of the Elect, as we say *in solidum*: that is said to be *in solidum*, when every one applieth the whole to himself, without diminution of any part. The sun is *in solidum* to every one that will make use of it, to inlighten every Creature that shutteth not his eyes. As a common Fountain is no mans in particular; for no man can say this is my Fountain alone, and yet every man can say this is mine: so that every Saint can say of God, he is mine *in solidum*, though he

he were alone, he may say God is mine. If ten thousands have him, yet God is his God. *God careth for all, as if there were but one, and for one, as if none but he.* God offers himself, not only to his whole Church, but to every one in particular, and therefore of every one he ought to be apprehended.

This is founded in all the great points and mysteries of Religion. As for instance, what is the ground of all the Petitions in the Lords Prayer? *Our Father.* What interest have we to all the Petitions, and to every Article of the Creed, if there be not a particular application? *I believe God the Father to be my God, Jesus Christ my Saviour, the Holy Ghost my Sanctifier, remission of sins, and life everlasting is mine.* We do no more then the Devils. Now every truth in Scripture is written for our comfort, and shall it be no more comfort to us, then to the Devils? doth the Scripture intend us no more comfort then the Devils? yes; but the Devil may say for the Church, there is remission of sins, and a God and Saviour; but not

for

for me, and that is his torment, he cannot come to particulars. So the Sacraments are to seal a particular faith, as every one in particular taketh the bread and wine, so by a particular faith, every one may say, Christ is mine, his death is mine, blood-shed mine, remission of sins and interest of Christ is mine. It doth not seal a general faith in the Clouds, but a particular assurance, that it belongeth to every one. And so in the words of the Catechise, the ministerial questioning of sinners, is intended, that every one that believeth, should apply it. If thou believest, and if thou believest, thou shalt be saved, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee. So that if we regard prayer and faith, if we regard the Sacraments, or the use of the Catechise, all inforce a particular faith. If we have not particular faith, we lose the vertue of all. So it is for the Commandements; put case, no man is named in particular, yet every one ought to ply in particular, that they ought to abstain from such a sin, and perform such duty; if they do so, they shall be glorified, if not, they shall be pun-

Sacraments seal a particular faith.

punished. And there is the same reason in faith, as in obedience. A man is condemn'd in Law, though not named in Law, because the general is set down here, and every man ought particularly to apply it, I ought not to have done so, and so. So that it overturneth the end of all, if a man labor not for a particular faith. To go farther. Now if I disable this interest of particular faith of Gods love, and Christs love, I loose the comfort of weak faith where it is true. What condition were they in now, when Christ biddeth them go? had not some of them denyed Christ, and had they not all forsaken him? and yet notwithstanding, *go tell Peter*, and tell them all, *I go to their Father, and their God.* So that the interest that a soul hath in Christ, who hath true faith, though a weak faith joyned with many infirmities, the interest he hath in Christ is not broke off, as you see by the example of the Apostles. And therefore I beseech you, let us comfort our selves in this, labouring for a particular faith, and then labor to maintain our interest notwithstanding our infirmities and faults, not-

Failings do not cut us off from Christ.

withſtanding our ſins paſt. Let not Satan rob us of our claim, that God is our God, and Father in Chriſt. Let us learn of Chriſt, we cannot have a better pattern. What doth Chriſt on the Croſſe, when he had the ſins of all the believing world upon him, and had there been ten thouſand times more, it had been all one, to ſo infinite a perſon *God-man*, he had made full ſatisfaction to Gods juſtice. But having ſo much upon him, did it take away his claim of God, as his God? It did not, but ſtill he ſaid, *my God, my God.* Was it a claim that did him any good? was it a uſeful claim? yes, for it was made good by his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, and therefore he might well ſay, *I go to my God, and your God.* I have overcome the wrath of God due for ſin, and therefore when I that had all the ſins of the world upon me, acknowledged God, to be my God, and underwent the burden of Gods wrath, and ſatisfied for all ſin, you may well ſay my God, not only from the pattern of Chriſt, becauſe he did ſo, but as a cauſe; I may ſay ſo, now becauſe Chriſt ſaid ſo

If Chriſt hath ſatisfied for us notwithſtanding our infirmities, we may call God our God.

so then; for he hath fully satisfied his Father, who had laid that burden on him: you therefore that have particular burdens of your own sins, and have not that other; but have a conscience troubling you, it is for good, because if you believe, that is taken away. But put case you had the guilt of your own sins, and of many sins beside, what is that to this of Christ, who had the guilt of all sin? And therefore let no guilt hinder you from a spirit of faith, to say, *my Father and my God.* Is Christ ascended to Heaven, to be a mediator of intercession to appear before God; for whom? is it not for sinners? what work is there in Heaven for a mediator, if we were not daily sinners? Christ that hath satisfied for sin, biddeth us after satisfaction, to think of God as a Father, and to think of his ascension, even for this end, to appear before God for us as our High-Priest, to make daily peace for us. His blood is of everlasting efficacy. And if *Abels* blood cried for vengeance, the blood of Christ crieth for mercy. As the appearing of the blood of *Abel*

Heb. 12. 24.

spake for vengeance, so the very appearing of Christ speaks enough for mercy to the sinner.

It is a comfortable clause, that in Hosea 2. 19. where God saith, *He will marry them in everlasting mercy:* so that mercy is part of the joynture of the Church. God will marry them in mercy; in what mercy? in pardoning mercy; as the Husband is to bear with the wife, the weaker Vessel, not to put her away for infirmities. Shall we attribute mercie to men, and not to God? Can a friend bear the infirmities of a friend, and a Huband of a Wife? & cannot Christ bear the infirmities of his spouse? and therefore never think that our infirmities may hinder our claim: you see it did not there. But, *go to my Father, and your Father.* This comfort we shall be driven to make use of sometime or other, & therefore make use of it now.

Mercy part of our mariage portion.

Object.

Answ.

But you will say, this is not comfort for common sort of Christians, it is not, and I intend it not for them. It is Childrens bread, and it must not be cast to Doggs: therefore they that have not God for their God, and live in any sin, they can lay no claim to him;

him; for they serve another God in their hearts, their vile courses are instead of their God, and in their affections above their God: and therefore let them not think any promise belongeth to them in that course. Let them think of God, as a consuming fire, as everlasting burnings, while they be such, and that their peace is as the peace that the soul hath when the strong man holdeth all in possession. When the conscience is speechless, and God hath given them up to hardness of heart, which is a desperate peace. This belongeth to then, that are resolved not to live in any sin, that have given themselves up to God: and yet by reason of the remainder of corruption, are driven to make use of that Petition, which Christ bids them to pray, *forgive us our daily sins.*

Use.

Assurance. Hence issueth this truth, that a Christian may be assured of his salvation in this world. For first of all grant, that we ought particularly to apply, as God offers himself to us, and that no infirmities, nor sins hinder this claim, then what followeth? but a

Christ

Christian believing, and repenting of his sins daily, may be assured that he is in the state of grace, because there be grounds of particular application, that therefore which seems to disable that interest, hinders not at all. And therefore labor to maintain that comfortable state of assurance, by all means; the grounds of it is, particular application, notwithstanding all sins and infirmities whatsoever, because Satan envieth it most, because it is a state wherein we honor God most.

I will not enter largely into the point, because I have spoken of it in other Texts; but for as much as concerneth this time, we must labor for that, without the which we cannot go through that which God calleth us to.

1. There be many duties and dispositions that God requires, which we cannot be in, without assurance of salvation on good grounds; what is that? God bids us be thankful in all things, how can I know that? unless I know God is mine, and Christ is mine, can I be thankful for that which I doubt of, and think I ought to doubt of? therefore it is such a

state

ſtate, without which I cannot perform other duties, and particularly the grand duty of thankfulneſs. And what a pittiful ſtate is this, that a man ſhould not be thankful for Chriſt, nor Heaven, nor for the ſtate of another world, that there ſhould be ſuch great matters, and yet they cannot thank God for them.

Joy ſprings from knowledg.

2. Again, God enjoyneth us to rejoyce. *Rejoyce, and again I ſay, rejoyce.* Can a man rejoyce, that his name is written in Heaven, and not know his name is written there? The Diſciples were very weak now, and yet notwithſtanding all their infirmities, they loved Chriſt, they caſt themſelves upon him, and had not choſen another Saviour. Therefore *rejoyce that your names are written in Heaven,* and how can a man rejoyce, that knoweth it not to be ſo? By Gods writing of the Law in a mans heart, he may know his name is written in Heaven. Can a man alwayes rejoyce, if he hath not grounds why?

Luk. 10. 10

3. Again, God requires chearfulneſs, God loveth a chearful giver, and

nd a chearful doer. It is the disposition, that is required in every thing, give me thy heart in every thing thou doſt. Alas, how can I perform chearful ſervice to God, when I doubt whether he be my God, and Father, or no? ſhall not I labor for a heart to yield chearful obedience, doth it not come deadly off? ſurely it doth. We ought to comfort our ſelves, and how can a man comfort himſelf in a condition full of uncertainties, no comforts are comfortable without this, That God is our God, and our Father, unleſs we know this; comforts themſelves are not comfortable unto us. None of the comforts we have, the comforts of this life, are not comforts to us, when the ſoul ſaith, perhaps God feeds me to ſlaughter, and perhaps I have theſe mercies as my portion in this world, and how can he be comfortable, when he apprehendeth not, that they iſſue from a ſpring of love, alas, comforts themſelves are uncomfortable. And therefore ſhall not I labor for that, without which I cannot be comforted, eſpecially it being a diſpoſition

Gods ſervice muſt be performed with chearfulneſſe.

No worldly comforts can ſatisfie the ſoul.

for our good, to be thankful, and chearful, and joyful, and large hearted.

4. God requires a disposition in us that we should be full of incouragements, and strong in the Lord, and that we should be couragious for his cause, in withstanding his enemies and our enemies. How can there be courage in resisting our corruptions, Satans temptations, how can there be courage in suffering persecution, and crosses in the world, if there be not some particular interest we have in Christ, and in God, it cannot be so? unless we will denie obedience to all duty injoyned, we must have this assurance which enters into all, which is the spirit that quickneth, and enliveneth all. Therefore labor for it.

Assurance earnestly to be labored for.

2. Else we shall take away the grounds that God inforceth good duties from in Scripture, as he doth inforce duty from this ground. *As Elect, see ye put on bowels of compassion,* I beseech you *by the mercies of God,* Rom. 12. *offer your selves as a sacrifice*

3 Col. 12.

in God Alas, I know not whether I shall have mercy or no; why take away your ground, and overthrow your principles. And therefore shall not we labor for that state of soul wherein we are fitted to be in that disposition, and to perform duty as God would have us. I therefore beseech you labor for assurance of salvation.

That we may maintain it the better, see the grounds of it. It is not in our perfection, for then the poor Disciples, where had they been? Alas they had dealt unfaithfully with Christ; but the ground of firmness is on Gods side, the certainty is on Gods part, not ours. Tell them *I go to my Father, and my God, and their Father and their God.* Though we make breaches every day, yet God breaketh not, as *Mal.* 3. *Verily I the Lord am not changeable, and therefore you are not consumed.* We change, ebbe and flowe, are to and fro, up and down every day, varying in our dispositions, though there be some root and seed of grace in us alwayes, yet there is a change in our dispositions every day, but it holdeth

Grounds of assurance.

on Gods part; and therefore Christ nameth not any qualification in them to build comfort on, but *my God*, and *your God*, will yet maintain the relation of a Father to you, that have not dealt as you should do, and maintaineth the relation of a God, notwithstanding your fall. So that we maintain not our assurance on any part in us, but on Gods love. *Whom he loveth, he loveth to the end.* Our God unchangably loveth us, in whom there is not so much as a shadow of change. And therefore in the last of the *Hebrews*, it is called an everlasting Covenant. *The God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant.* By the blood of Christ there is an everlasting Covenant, God will be our God to death, and in death, and for ever. For this relation being on Gods part, extendeth it self from forgiveness of sins to life everlasting. It is alwayes, the blood of Christ is the blood of an everlasting Covenant. I will marry thee to me for ever. It hold-

Assurance maintained to us on Gods part.

John 13.1.

Heb.13.20

holdeth ſure on Gods part. Hoſ. 2. 18.

Let us therefore labor to maintain this aſſurance of ſalvation from Gods love.

2. But for our comfort, we muſt do our parts too, though it begin with God. It beginneth on Gods part. He loveth us firſt, and imbraceth us firſt, and we muſt love again, and imbrace again. We muſt deſire of God grace to anſwer relation. Therefore I will preſcribe ſome rules, how we may ſay, God is our God with comfort. That we may have the comfort of it, by making good our intereſt in him, to make it good that we are Sonnes, as well as to call him Father, that we are his people, as well as to call him our God, his ſpouſe, as well as call him our Husband. And becauſe this cometh from God, joyn this withall our endeavors. Lord thou muſt begin, I deſire to ſhew my ſelf as a ſpouſe to thee, but thou muſt diſcover thy ſelf to me. I deſire to love thee, but diſcover thy love firſt, all I can do is but reflection. Thou muſt ſhine on me firſt, ſo

Rules to know how God is our God.

desire God to reveal himself more and more, in Christ Jesus, and then we cannot but carry our selves to him, as we should do in our Relation.

This day we must perform the relation on our sides: there be two words that go to this heavenly bargain. The Covenant consisteth of two parts. Now desire God, by his grace, to inable us to do our part, for he doth both. And desire him according to his promise, to teach us to love him, and to write his Law in our hearts to do what is good, and circumcise our hearts, and give his holy spirit. We aske no more, then he hath promised, and so go boldly to him. Lord, thou hast made a Covenant with us, we cannot keep it without thee, thou hast not only promised grace and gifts, but the grace to perform the Covenant on our parts must come from thee. And this God will do: therefore in the use of means attend upon him, and looking to him, we shall have grace to do our parts, and then maintain this assurance, with

without which we cannot live as Christians should live.

That we may further maintain this Relation, that God is our God; Let us labor to get into Christ, for it is in him that God is our Father, and to grow up in Christ, to growe more and more, to grow up in faith, and in all grace.

A gratious Christian never wanteth arguments of assurance of salvation; it is the dead-hearted Christian, the careless Christian: therefore labor, as to be in Christ, so to grow up in the knowledge of Christ.

And so to know God in Christ, labor to see the face of God in Christ, for in him are all the beams of his love, as the beames of the Sun in a glasse are gathered, so the beams of all Gods love meet in Christ. So lovely is God in Christ, whatsoever we have in Christ, it is from God in Christ. And whatsoever we have from God, it is through Christ, therefore growe in the knowledge of Christ, in faith in Christ. To this end are the Sacraments, that we might growe up in Simile.

him, and be fed into Christ. And then we may make right use of it, as the Ordinance that God hath sanctified for this end. And as God doth take us out & set a stamp upō us, so labor to make choyce of God more & more, & choice of God in Christ; for there be the 2. objects of our faith & love. Chuse God for our God, & esteem him above all, and renounce all other, and resign our selves wholly to him, for all is ours, when God is ours. He setteth us apart from other men, taking us out, and appropriateth us to himself, chuseth us for his Jewels. I beseech you labor daily to chuse God to be your God. If we say, we are Gods, let us make choyce of him at the same time, and appropriate him with our choyce. He is mine in particular, there is renunciation of all others. I have served other Gods heretofore, the world, and the flesh, and the favor of man have been my God, but they shall be my God no more: If we chuse him not, and appropriate him as ours, and renounce all other, and give our selves to him, we cannot say he is *our God*: this we should practice every day: In the solicitation of sin, or de-

God and Christ the Objects of faith and love.

deſpair for ſin, make uſe of this choice and appropriation, and reſignation: If we be tempted to any ſin, why I am not mine own, I am Gods, I have choſen him to be my God, I have appropriated my ſelf to him, I have renounced all other, I have offered my ſelf to him, therefore what have I to do with ſin, with this temptation, I have taken the Sacrament on it, that God is mine, and Chriſt is mine, with all his benefits, therefore if there be any ſolicitatiõ to ſin, make this uſe of it; & ſo we ſhal grow in aſſurance of our intereſt in God, when we can make uſe of it on all occaſions.

Intereſt in God an argument againſt ſin.

If when we be moved to any ſin by Satan, or our own fleſh, which is a Devil within us: this is contrary to my Covenant, this is contrary to the renewing of the Covenant, ſo often renewed in the Sacrament, & therefore I will not commit it. It is contrary to the State I am advanced to, and contrary to my relation, God is my Father and my God; and therefore I muſt be his, and what have I to do with ſin? what hath pride to do with a heart bequeathed to God? what hath

The fleſh a Devil within us.

hath luſt and filthineſs? what hath injuſtice, or any thing elſe that is ſinful, to do in a heart that hath dedicated, and conſecrated it ſelf to God, who hath given up himſelf, and all he can do, and to whom we have given up all we have, and ſhall we give our ſtrength to ſin and Satan, his enemies?

Thus we ſhould grow in aſſurance, exerciſing the increaſe and knowledge of our intereſt. I beſeech you therefore let us uſe theſe and the like things to make God our God. And if any temptation for ſin be joyned, as Satan cannot but ſolicit to ſin; ſo he laboreth when we have ſinned, to tempt to deſpair for ſin; for they be the two wayes by which Satan prevails. Now fetch comfort againſt both from hence. God is *my God*, and *my Father*, and Chriſt teacheth them to call him ſo; and therefore notwithſtanding ſin, I may go to God, and call him Father. The Diſciples, though their ſin was great, yet on their humility they were to acknowledge God to be their Father, and their God. And there-

That God is our God, and our Father is ground of infinite comfort.

therefore answer Satan; I ought not to abuse and break off, and deny my interest in God, as my Father, and my God, for any sin, because the Disciples did not so; and Christ hath taught how to make use of God, and to acknowledge him for my comfort. We cannot have a better guide then God, and therefore never think of God, but as *our God* and *our Father*, and labor to answer all Satans temptations in that kinde from hence.

3. Again, this assurance that God is our God in Christ, and our Father, is wrought by the sealing of the spirit, and sanctifying of us: therefore take heed, we grieve not the spirit of *God*. *Gods* spirit moveth our hearts often times in hearing the word, or reading or praying, when we have any good motions, or when we entertain them, and therefore do not grieve the spirit of *God*, whose office is to seal us to the day of redemption, to assure us *God* is our *God*, and our Father in Christ. Grieve him not, least he grieve us, by reaching and tor-

Assurance that God is our God, wrought by the sealing of the spirit, and the spirits sanctifying.

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menting our consciences, and that is the way to maintain our interest. Take heed of crossing the spirit, especially by any sin against conscience. Conscience is *Gods* Deputy, grieve not the spirit, grieve not conscience, for Conscience is God *Deputative*, it is a little God within us. And therefore if we will not alienate God from us, to whom we have given our selves, if we be true believers, do nothing against his *Deputy* and *Agent*, the spirit that sanctifieth us, and sealeth us to the day of redemption.

Conscience is a little God within us.

This is the way to maintain assurance, that God is our God. For men may be led with a spirit of presumption, and say, God is my God. But if Conscience telleth them, they live in sin against Conscience, and the motions of the spirit, and suppress them and kill them, as birthes that they would not have grow in their hearts, then they cannot say, God is my God, but conscience telleth them they lie. And therefore I beseech you, labor for an holy life. That faith that maketh this claim, that God is my Father

ther and my God, is *a purifying faith.* 1 Jo 3.
It is a faith quickening the ſoul, a faith purifying, a faith cleanſing. Faith is wonderfully operative, eſpecially having theſe promiſes; what promiſes? *I will be your God and your Father. Having ſuch promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſſe of fleſh and ſpirit, and grow up in all holineſs in the feare of the Lord.* And therefore labor for that faith that layeth hold upon this priviledge. God is our Father, and our God; make it good by this, that it be a purifying faith, an operative faith, that worketh by love, that ſheweth it ſelf in our converſation. The more we labor, and grow this way, the more we growe in aſſurance of ſalvation.

Beloved, favor cannot be maintained with great perſons, without much induſtry and reſpect, and obſervance of diſtance. A man, that will maintain the favor of great perſons, muſt be well read in their diſpoſitions, muſt know how to pleaſe them, and yield them all obſervance and reſpect.

Respect with God preserved with much industry & holiness.

spect. And shall we think then to preserve respect with God, without much industry and holiness? It cannot be. *And therefore give all diligence,* (not a little) *to make your Calling and Election sure.* It requireth all diligence, it is worth your pains. We live on this, that he is our God, and will be our God to death, and in death for ever more, That God is our God to everlasting, that he is of an equal extent with the soul, he liveth to fill it, and make it happy. Our souls being of an eternal subsistance, therefore it standeth us upon to give all diligence to make our Calling and Election sure, else it will not be maintained. Why do not Christians injoy the comforts of this, that God is their God in Christ, more then they do? the reason is, they be negligent to maintain intercourse between God and them. We must know our distances: there must be reverent cariage to God. A loose Christian can never injoy the comforts of God. He is so great, and we so mean, we ought to reverence him,

2 Pet. 1. 20.

Phil. 2. 11.

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we ought to love him with fear, and rejoyce with trembling. Humble thy self to walk with thy God, where there is a great deal of humility, it maintaineth friendship. We cannot walk with God, as a friend as *Abraham* is said to be Gods friend. We must acknowledge our selves to be dust and ashes, know him in his greatness, and our selves in our meanness, if he will maintain this to our hearts, that God is our God. If we be careful to maintain this, surely he that delighteth himself in the prosperity of his Servants, will delight to make himself more and more known to us, that we may be assured of our salvation.

All that hear me, are such as have not yet made choice of God, to be their God, or have made choice. Let me speak a word to both; for there be many that yet have their choice to make, that have other Lords, and other Gods to rule over them. Let them consider, what a fearful state it is not to be able to say, in regard of life everlasting, *God is my God and my Fa-*

The fearful condition of those that have not God to be their God.

Father. They can say, they be Gods Creatures; but what a fearful condition is it not to be able to say, God is my Father? will not these know, whom he is not a God to in favor, he will be a god to in vengeance. He must be friend or enemy, there is no third in God. God and the Devil divide all mankind, they share all. If thou be not Gods, and canst not say so, on good titles, thou art the Devils. Yet God is daily pulling men out of the Kingdom of the Devil, by opening their eyes to see their miserable condition; yet all go under these two grand titles, *Gods* and the *Devils*. If thou canst not say, *God* is thy *God*, then the *Devil* is thy *God*; and what a fearful condition is it to be under the God of the world by a worldly, carnal disposition; and perhaps thou maist die so, if thou be not careful to get out of it. If God be not our God, he is our enemy; and then Creatures, Angels, Devils are against us, conscience against us, word against us, all against us. If he be for us, who is against

gainst us? If he be against us, who is for us? a terrible condition, and therefore get out of it, I beseech you.

But how shall I doe? is there mercy for such a wretch? yea, he offereth himself to be thy God, if thou wilt come in: wherefore serveth our Ministry, the word of grace? but to preach life to all repentent sinners? He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy. And therefore God hath ordained Ambassadors of peace to proclaim, if you will come in. And he intreateth you to come in, and he chargeth, and commandeth you. You be Rebels, not only against him, but enemies to your own souls, if you do not. And therefore I beseech you, if you be not yet come in, adde this more, you be sacrilegious persons, if you be not Christians in earnest, have not you given your selves to God in baptisme? and have not you in your lives given your selves to lusts, which you renounced at your baptisme? now you have alienated your selves from

The office of the Ministry is to preach life to all repentant sinners.

from God, to whom you were dedicated. Did not you ingage your selves to God in your Baptisme? and is not he willing to receive you? He thought of you, when you could not think of your selves. And therefore as it bindeth you over to greater punishment, if you will not come in, but continue sacrilegious persons from God, to whom you have dedicated your selves, so God preventeth you with mercy.

God preventeth us by his mercies.

He incourageth by the seal of election in Baptisme, to make it good by faith, without which it will do no good, being but a seal to a blank: therefore how many incouragements have you to come in? Take Gods gracious offer, he giveth you time to make your peace, it is nothing, but wilful rebellion to stand out against God.

For they that have given themselves to God, and now renewed their interest in him, by the Sacrament, let them conceive, what a word of comfort they have in this, *That Christ*

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is theirs, and *God is theirs*. What an ocean of comfort is it, when all things leave you, as all things will, yet we have God, that will be a God for evermore. At the time of death, what comfort will it be to say, God is mine, Christ is mine. Life is mine no longer, world is mine no longer, friends forsake me, but I am interessed in God, and have made Covenant with God, who is a God for ever, the Covenant I have made, is an everlasting Covenant. It is of that largeness, the comfort is, that the Angels themselves admire it, the Devils envie it, and it is a matter of glory and praise in Heaven for ever. Therefore make much of such a priviledge, that is the envy of Devils, the admiration of Angels, that is the joy of a Christians heart here, and matter of glorifying God for ever, world without end. That God in Christ is become his God here, and for ever, it is a ravishing consideration. It is larger then our hearts, here be comforts larger then the capacity of our hearts.

God our comfort the losse all thin

Cor

1. Glorie under hope of glory.
2. Glory in afflictions.
3. Glory in God.

Cor vestrum soli Deo patere debet, our hearts ought all to lie open to divine things; for they have more in them, then the heart can contain. If we will shut them, shut them to worldly things. Oh the comfort of a Christian that hath made his state sure, let him glory in the Lord.

There be three degrees of glory, in all, let him glory under hope of glory, glory in afflictions, and glory in God, that is, we glory in God to be our God. That in the sharing, and dividing of all things, God hath given himself to us, and what an offer is this? that when God divideth the world to the Children of men, you shall have this, and that, but you shall not have me. But to his Children he hath given himself, and he hath nothing better to give, and indeed there is nothing else needs; for there is more in it, then we can speak, but that when God divideth all things, he should give such a share as himself: is not this a glory, that a poor Creature should have God to be his,

his, and all he hath to be his, to make use of it in life and in death, it is worth all the world; It is worth our endeavors to make our Calling and Election sure, when we may have this comfort from it. 2 Pet. 1. 10

FINIS.